

THE PRINCETON SEMINARY BULLETIN

Afrikaner Civil Religion and the Current
South African Crisis

David J. Bosch

The Minister as Prophet

Peter J. Paris

Opening Convocation, September 22, 1985

Bread of Heaven

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A Sociological Commentary

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Afrikaner Civil Religion and the Current South African Crisis

by DAVID J. BOSCH

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THE PURPOSE of this paper is to illustrate how Afrikaner civil religion developed and how religious and other forces step by step yet irrevocably prepared South Africa for the crisis it faces today. In tracing the course of these forces my intention is neither to portray the Afrikaner as the villain of the story nor to offer an apology for what he was and did. I merely wish to illustrate how people—even those who believe themselves to be the makers of history—easily and frequently fall victim to their own past and become prisoners of their own history. In this respect Afrikaners are by no means unique; only, in their case, the forces of history were so overwhelming and they themselves so puny in the face of those forces that the outcome of this crucible could not but be more dramatic than it was elsewhere. In saying this, I am not trying to absolve the Afrikaner from his personal responsibility; I am only suggesting that all of us are at the same time shapers and victims of history and that, in a given context, the one ele-

ment rather than the other may predominate. In a classical Greek tragedy the actors are both subjects of the events that take place and pawns on a chessboard. They are free to act, and, yet again, not free to do so.

I shall return to the metaphor of tragedy. For the moment, however, I would like to point out that the outside world frequently has only one explanation for the Afrikaner's life- and world-view and his policy of racial discrimination: his Calvinism. It is because they were Calvinists—so the argument goes—that Afrikaners, ever since the founding of a Dutch colony at the Cape of Good Hope in 1652, have regarded themselves as a race apart, a specially chosen people, a latter-day Israel, sent by God to subdue Africa's original inhabitants and transform the wilderness into a garden. They were, in fact, to quote the title of a well-known popular book on the subject, *The Puritans in Africa*.¹ Dutch and

¹ W. A. de Klerk, *The Puritans in Africa* (London: 1975).

French Calvinists, so the theory has it, had emigrated to South Africa *before* the major Calvinist tradition in Europe had relapsed into scholasticism or had begun to adjust to the changing intellectual and social world of the Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution. The "primitive Calvinism" of the early Dutch settlers at the Cape was transmitted essentially unchanged to successive generations. Its most basic tenet was the Calvinist notion of predestination with its concomitant concept of the elect.²

The first person to have suggested that Calvinism was the key to understanding the Afrikaner was, significantly, not somebody from their own ranks but the famous missionary-traveller David Livingstone.³ From 1849 onwards he was putting forward, in ever clearer terms, the theory that it was the Afrikaners' Calvinism that had shaped their thinking and policies, particularly toward blacks. He attacked the Dutch Reformed Church as the ideological fountainhead of persistent injustice to blacks throughout the entire course of Afrikaner history.

Since Livingstone, this hypothesis became almost universally accepted as *the* explanation of the Afrikaner's mentality and actions, first in English liberal circles and subsequently by virtually all non-Afrikaner students of Afrikanerdom.

² Cf. also André du Toit, "No chosen people: The myth of the Calvinist origins of Afrikaner nationalism and racial ideology," *The American Historical Review* 88:4 (October 1983), pp. 920-28.

³ For a summary of Livingstone's views on the Afrikaners, cf. Du Toit, op. cit., pp. 939-47.

It is one of the ironies of history that, from the late nineteenth century onward, Afrikaners themselves began to propound the so-called "Calvinist paradigm" as the key to the understanding of their history. The Afrikaner version of the "Calvinist paradigm" included an important modification, however. Whereas English liberal scholars regarded Calvinism as the ogre that was responsible for the Afrikaners' idea of racial superiority and their policy of subduing black tribes and oppressing them, Afrikaner scholars of the late nineteenth and the twentieth centuries understood their ancestors as having regarded themselves as God's chosen people who had the duty to subdue the black tribes in order to civilize and uplift them. Thus both friend and foe agreed that it was Calvinism that shaped Afrikanerdom; the one, however, wished to prove how bad Calvinism was, the other how good it was.

A handful of modern scholars have, however, once again gone through the early records with a fine-tooth comb. The result of this research was an almost total rejection of the "Calvinist paradigm" as explanation of early Afrikaner history and thinking. Two points have to be identified in this respect.

First, it is becoming ever clearer that the parallel with the Puritans has little, if any, substance to it.⁴ In New England no fewer than one hundred thirty university graduates, ninety-two of them ministers, were

⁴ W. S. Hudson (ed.), *Nationalism and Religion in America* (New York: 1970), p. 3; quoted in André du Toit, *Puritans in Africa?* (Unpublished paper, n.d.), p. 4.

among the Puritans arriving before 1640. This factor together with others ensured vigorous theological and intellectual activities in seventeenth-century Massachusetts and Connecticut, something that was totally absent in the contemporary Cape Colony, which started as a refreshment post for ships bound for the East Indies. There, relatively little intellectual activity was in evidence, the rudimentary ministrations of the few early clergymen left no recognizable theological impact, and the farmers in the outlying districts lived largely in almost total isolation from the already limited intellectual and social activities at the Cape itself. Most of these early Afrikaners were unsophisticated and, in fact, barely literate. The Bible was often the only book they had and read, and they tended to interpret it literally, not only as the revealed Word of God but also as the final source of all knowledge. These characteristics they shared, of course, with virtually all religious communities of simple people; religious fundamentalism is, however, not the same as Calvinism. Neither did the fact that they all belonged to the Reformed Church automatically make them Calvinists. For more than a century and a half all their ministers came from Holland and even among those only very few could be regarded as classical Calvinists. Several of them had been influenced by the Dutch "Second Reformation" and by English and Scottish evangelicalism; towards the end of the eighteenth century the impact of Reformed pietism at the Cape was undoubtedly greater than that of original Calvinism, particularly be-

cause of the ministry of H. R. van Lieer and M. C. Vos.

The contemporary records concur with this observation. Until approximately 1870, more than two centuries after the founding of the Dutch settlement at the Cape, there is no direct evidence of the Afrikaners themselves appealing to their Calvinist beliefs as explanation or justification for their peculiar way of life. Where a link is seen this is done, without exception, by outside observers who simply, on the basis of the fact that all Afrikaners were members of the Dutch Reformed Church and had applied the Bible to their own situation by means of a literal interpretation, deduced that Afrikaner political and societal attitudes and acts were to be ascribed to Calvinism.

This leads me to a second observation: Livingstone's view that early Afrikaners regarded themselves as a chosen people with a manifest destiny, in fact, reveals more about Livingstone himself than about the Afrikaners. He and many other British colonial and missionary figures of this period were imbued with the belief that Britain had a divinely ordained civilizing mission in Africa and Asia. This kind of belief was simply in the air, as it were, among Western nations, most particularly Britain. Victorians, as Ronald Robinson and John Gallagher put it, were "suffused with a vivid sense of superiority and self-righteousness, if with every good intention."⁵ Livingstone was no exception. He believed,

⁵ Robinson and Gallagher, *Africa and the Victorians: The Climax of Imperialism in the Dark Continent* (London: 1961), pp. 2-3; quoted in Du Toit, "No chosen people," p. 939.

however, that the Afrikaner settlers in the interior of southern Africa had no right to such divine claims and so, after first having imputed to them the general Western notion of manifest destiny, he immediately proceeded to reject the legitimacy and validity of such a notion among Afrikaners.

In summary, then, and in very broad outline, my argument so far has been that Afrikaners during the first two centuries of settlement in southern Africa were, on the whole, Calvinists only in name, had no sense of a manifest destiny, but were, by and large, unsophisticated folk who reacted to the challenges of their context in an ad hoc manner and by means of a very literalist interpretation of the Bible.

In the course of the nineteenth century, however, the situation would begin to change fundamentally. The forces that were operative here were many. I confine myself for the purposes of this lecture to only four of these.

History

The first force or factor to take into consideration is the Afrikaners' peculiar history and the way in which that history molded them and gave birth to the people we know today. I do not intend to recount Afrikaner history in capsule form. Rather, by comparing Afrikaner history with American history, I want to highlight some significant differences and the influence of those on our two respective peoples.

In the year 1806, the budding Afrikaner nation was cut off from its mother country, Holland, not—as was the case with Americans—

through a War of Independence which happened to be successful but rather by means of exchanging a rather inefficient distant Dutch master for a much more efficient yet totally alien British one. This happened roughly in the same period that armed clashes with the Xhosa on the Eastern frontier became more and more common. Soon the Afrikaner settlers found themselves caught in a pincer movement between an alien and unsympathetic administration, bent on Anglicizing them, on the one hand, and the advances of the numerically vastly superior black armies on the other.

Many Afrikaners chose to attempt escaping from the pincer by trekking north, crossing the Orange River, and establishing the three northern republics of Natal, the Orange Free State, and the Transvaal. Time and again, however, their efforts at political self-determination were thwarted, as the British annexed or conquered one newly acquired Afrikaner territory after the other: Natal (1842), Basutoland (1868), Griqualand West and the Kimberley diamond fields (1871), and the Transvaal (1877). In the First War of Independence (1880-81) the Transvaal was victorious, only to succumb, with the Orange Free State, during the Anglo-Boer War, twenty years later (1899-1902).

The Afrikaners' situation was, in fact, always tenuous—to put it mildly—not only with respect to the steady encroachments of Britain, but also because they were vastly outnumbered by blacks in their new republics.

Once again a reference to contemporary North America might be

helpful to illustrate the differences. In 1830 President Andrew Jackson signed the Indian Removal Act and eastern tribes were directed to the vast Central Plains area. In the course of the next seventy years scores of Indian tribes were relocated in the Central Plains; they came from Florida and Georgia, from New England, from Michigan and Wisconsin, from Idaho and Oregon, from Texas and New Mexico. The Central Plains were not, however, destined to be a permanent sanctuary for the Indians, since year after year thousands upon thousands of whites were still pouring across the Mississippi. By mid-century as many as fifty-five thousand westward trekkers a year were breaching the Indian frontier. Treaties signed, treaties broken, more treaties signed—these were the legal weapons used to appropriate Indian lands and confine tribes in shrinking areas. The creation of Oklahoma Territory in 1890 shrank Indian Territory by about fifty percent.⁶ The white migrants and settlers never really doubted the outcome of the clash with the Indians: they were superior to them in numbers, in skills, in weapons, in sophistication, in resoluteness.

The contemporary scene in the interior of southern Africa was vastly different. At a time when fifty-five thousand whites per year were crossing the Mississippi, the total Afrikaner population of the two remaining republics—the Orange Free State and the Transvaal, then about

twenty years of age—was still much less than fifty-five thousand, and they were vastly outnumbered by blacks within their borders and much more so beyond them. Once again Afrikaners were caught in a pincer movement: between the encroaching British in the South and the Zulu, the Ndebele, the Shangaan, the Pedi, and the Tswana to the East and to the North. In these circumstances the Afrikaners were to find their identity and security—in a literal *and* figurative sense—in the *laager*, where their ox-wagons, drawn into a circle, would protect them against the outside world.

This *laager* mentality was immensely strengthened in and by the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) in which the remaining Afrikaner republics lost their independence. F. Hertz is correct when he says, "... more than anything else it is common grief that binds a nation together, more than triumphs."⁷ For Britain the war was no more than a passing episode; for the Afrikaners, who lost eight times as many women and children in the concentration camps than soldiers on the battlefield, this was the most crucial event in their history, the matrix out of which a new people was born. When, immediately after the war, Lord Milner embarked on a vigorous policy of anglicization and forthwith banned the use of the Dutch language from all schools, this was regarded as a total onslaught in the extreme. After having lost their political freedom on the battlefield, Afrikaners were now to lose their iden-

⁶ Information gleaned from *Central Plains*, map no. 9 in the Making of American Series, supplement to the September 1985 issue of *National Geographic*.

⁷ F. Hertz, *Nationality in History and Politics* (London: 1957), p. 12.

tity as well, through the schools. In this, the Afrikaner's darkest hour, it was above all the Afrikaans churches that rallied to the people's aid. Church and people became virtually indistinguishable.

In the burgeoning civil religion of the postwar period the young Afrikaans language was utilized to foster Afrikaner sentiments. Poets, particularly Totius (J. D. du Toit) had an enormous influence. In one of his poems, "Vergewe en vergeet" ("Forgive and forget"), he compared the Afrikaner with a small thorn tree, which had been trampled down by a large ox-wagon, symbolizing Britain. The tree slowly stood up again, however, and healed its wounds with the ointment of its own resin. In another poem Totius selected a semi-desert weed, the hardy and resilient *besembos*, and made it a symbol of the Afrikaner people. The *besembos* flourishes where most other and stronger plants would die. Even if you burn it down, it just sprouts forth anew and flourishes as before. These and other poems became a lens through which Afrikaners were looking upon their past. They conveyed to generations of Afrikaners the notion that they are there to stay, that they are irrevocably part and parcel of the soil of Africa, of the veld and the mountains and the rivers, and that no earthly force would ever succeed in subduing them, let alone routing them.

Since the Anglo-Boer War, eighty years ago, this sentiment has, on the whole, grown in strength rather than weakened. For many decades the National Party and the Dutch Reformed Churches were seen as jointly responsible for keeping the

laager intact, buttressing the weak spots, and keeping up the morale of the people. After the National Party came to power in 1948, the entire legislative machinery was harnessed with this one purpose in mind: to safeguard Afrikaner identity once and for all so that it would never again be exposed defenselessly to the onslaughts of the outside world.

This then, very briefly, is the historical matrix out of which the Afrikaner people was born. A small white tribe, in the extreme southern tip of a vast black continent, cut off from the mother country almost two centuries ago, threatened with extinction from two sides, the blacks and the British, they are determined to maintain and defend their identity. This historical reality in the course of time coalesced with the forces of the spirit to shape the contemporary Afrikaner. I want to draw your attention, very briefly, to three of these forces.

Religious Forces

Reformed Evangelicalism. The first and oldest of these spiritual forces is Reformed evangelicalism. During the latter part of the eighteenth century a few Dutch pastors who had been deeply influenced by the Dutch "Second Reformation" and the Evangelical Awakenings in the British Isles served at the Cape. The two best known ones were H. R. van Lier and M. C. Vos. Through their ministry an indelible stamp of evangelicalism was put on the Dutch Reformed Church there. In the course of the nineteenth century this trait was immensely strengthened by the arrival at the Cape of Scottish Presbyterian ministers who, incidentally,

at one stage outnumbered those of Dutch descent. The most famous person to come out of this group was Andrew Murray, Jr., whose pastoral career spanned an almost incredible sixty-nine years (1848-1917).

Towards the end of the nineteenth century the broad and rather amorphous evangelical tradition comprised, generally speaking, three groups:

1. A small, more pietistic and revivalistic group of people who were inclined to other-worldliness and eschewed politics.

2. A second and much larger group. During the period of the awakening of Afrikaner nationalism, particularly after the Anglo-Boer War, the idea of a *volkskerk* (church of the people; national or ethnic church) gradually took root among adherents of this group. The *volkskerk* idea took concrete shape, *inter alia*, in the church's concern for the plight of the Afrikaner after the war. In this group the church's concern for people's social and political plight was, on the whole, limited to the Afrikaner.

3. A third group, smaller than the second, which kept alive the missionary spirit of the eighteenth century Awakening. They knew that it was impossible to concern oneself with the spiritual needs of blacks without at the same time getting involved in their very real bodily and social needs. The scores of Dutch Reformed Church missionaries who went to Malawi, Kenya, Nigeria, Zambia, and Zimbabwe as well as those who worked within the borders

of South Africa virtually all came out of this third group. In the course of time it is out of this group that the first voices of protest against Afrikaner politics would come.⁸

Kuyperian Calvinism. The second major religious force to have shaped Afrikaner civil religion was Kuyperian neo-Calvinism. When Abraham Kuyper and his supporters used the slogan, "In isolation lies our strength," their intention was to rally the small, scattered forces of authentic Calvinism in Holland, unite these, and spread their message throughout the Dutch nation. The slogan thus propagated isolation for the sake of mission; it aimed at winning the Dutch people back to original Calvinism. In fact, Kuyper was so imbued with missionary zeal for Calvinism that racial differences presented no problem to him. In his Stone Lectures, delivered at Princeton Seminary in 1898, he argued:

... the commingling of blood [was] the physical basis of all higher human development. . . . [G]roups which by commingling have crossed their traits with those of other tribes . . . have attained a higher perfection. It is noteworthy that the process of human development steadily proceeds with those groups whose historic characteristic is not isolation but the commingling of blood . . . [sometimes] of very dif-

⁸ Cf. J.J.F. Durand, "Afrikaner Piety and Dissent," in *Resistance and Hope: South African Essays in Honor of Beyers Naudé*, ed. Charles Villa-Vicencio and John W. de Gruchy (Cape Town/Grand Rapids: 1985), pp. 42-45.

ferent tribes. . . . [T]he history of our race does not aim at the improvement of any single tribe, but at the development of [human-kind] taken as a whole, and therefore needs this commingling of blood in order to attain its end. Now in fact history shows that the nations among whom Calvinism flourished most widely exhibit in every way this same mingling of races.⁹

Kuyper's concern therefore was for a militant expansionist Calvinism. On South African soil, however, particularly after the Anglo-Boer War, Kuyper's ideals were adapted to local circumstances. As they blended with the existing socio-political realities they underwent some significant mutations. The very survival of Afrikanerdom was at stake during those years. Thus the slogan, "In isolation lies our strength" was not understood, as it was in Holland, in terms of isolation-for-mission, but in terms of isolation-for-survival. For the first time in South African history one now encountered sustained theological (or ideological) arguments according to which Afrikaners should neither fraternize with foreigners nor break down the walls of racial separation instituted by God; like Israel, the Afrikaner's salvation lay in racial purity and separate schools and churches. One of the first proposals for a thorough-going political and social segregation was put forward by a Kuyperian pastor, the Reverend W. J. Postma, in 1907. His suggestion was to "... give the black na-

tions a piece of ground where they can establish their own schools, churches, prisons, parliaments, universities. If we go there we must not ask to own ground or vote. . . . If they come here to work they must not play tennis. . . ."¹⁰

In this way Calvinism indeed became the basis of an ideology that was used to keep Afrikaners apart from other people—not, however, the original expression of Calvinism and not, as often alleged, among seventeenth-, eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Afrikaners, but Kuyperian neo-Calvinism, and only at the dawn of the twentieth century. During the ensuing decades it would grow steadily, both in strength and in sophistication. It gradually began to overshadow the older evangelical tradition which tended to be much more pragmatic and less likely to justify its actions by an appeal to unchanging biblical principles. "[I]t became increasingly difficult for any Afrikaner theologian openly to oppose the Kuyperian system in its South African version. Opposition to it could not only be misconstrued as treason to the Afrikaner cause, but also as an indication of theological unreliability and as a threat to the Reformed tradition as such."¹¹ Evangelicalism proved to be too weak theologically to counter effectively the Kuyperian apartheid theology.

Romantic Nationalism. The hope of any fundamental theological change disappeared almost completely when, during the 1930s, Kuyperian neo-Calvinism and the

⁹ A. Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism* (Grand Rapids: 1961), pp. 35-36.

¹⁰ Quoted by Irving Hexham, *The Irony of Apartheid* (1981), p. 180.

¹¹ Durand, op. cit., p. 41.

volkskerk current in Afrikaner evangelicalism blended with a third religio-ideological force: romantic nationalism. Not that Afrikaners simply swallowed German National Socialism lock, stock, and barrel. Rather, we had a repeat of what had happened a generation earlier: once again Afrikaners would selectively adapt what they had received from Europe, in such a way that it would speak to their specific situation as an embattled people struggling to define and protect their identity.

Romantic nationalist ideas were disseminated in South Africa by young Afrikaners who had studied in Germany in the 1930s. Several of them rose to prominence and dominated the political and cultural scene from the 1950s to the 1970s. One of these was Dr. H. F. Verwoerd, who was to become the great theorist of "separate development" and prime minister in the 1950s and 1960s. Another one was Dr. Piet Meyer, for many years chairman of the Afrikaner Broederbond and head of the South African Broadcasting Corporation and the man who shaped and molded that organization into what it is to this day. A third person was Dr. N. J. Diederichs who later served as cabinet minister and also as state president. Yet another one was Dr. Geoff Cronjé, sociologist, who, in 1945, published his *'n Tuiste vir die nageslag* (A home for posterity), which became the object of intense study and discussion in Afrikaner circles. This book was dedicated to Cronjé's wife "... and all other Afrikaner mothers, because they are the protectors of the purity of blood of the Boer nation."

Let us look, briefly, at some of the

contributions of two of those mentioned above: Meyer and Diederichs.

In December 1941 Meyer read a paper entitled "Die vooraand van ons vrywording" (The eve of our liberation) at an Afrikaner national youth congress. His definition of a Calvinist-Christian view of life (which he labelled "Krugerism") was clearly influenced by contemporary events in Germany. The organic national community is seen as a pyramidal structure with, at the top, the leaders who have acquired that position because of their charisma and drive. At the very top we have the "natural leader of the people, called by God and endowed with the necessary authority to rule the people according to God's will. ..."¹² The leader called by God is apparently not elected by the people but only "confirmed" by them, since his authority is "organic."¹³ Political groupings who oppose the implementation of the national calling cannot be allowed to operate.¹⁴ The battle now (1941) raging in Europe was a battle for rejuvenation, between the emerging organic national idea and the liberal individualism of the previous century. The gist of the national idea is the view that the people is an organic community of soil, blood, language, culture, state, tradition, world-view, and destiny. This movement of the people (*volk*) has found its purest and most powerful manifestation first in Italian Fascism and then in German National Socialism.¹⁵ Since the victory

¹² P. J. Meyer, *Die vooraand van ons vrywording* (Potchefstroom: 1941), p. 25 (my translation).

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 25-26.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

of the latter is imminent, the Afrikaners find themselves on "the eve of our liberation." Thus the title of the paper becomes transparent.¹⁶

In 1936 Nico Diederichs, then professor of philosophy in Bloemfontein, published his *Nasionalisme as Lewensbeskouing*. Only in the nation, as the most total comprehensive human community, can the individual find true fulfillment.¹⁷ A nation is first and foremost a unity of love—of what is eternal and super-temporal.¹⁸ It permeates everything and embraces the whole person. It is the most complete community imaginable. A person is first of all a member of the nation. Love for one's nation is the highest and most sublime love one can experience in the earthly realm, but only if it forms part of one's love to God. Service to one's nation is part of one's service to God, for love of one's nation is part of one's love to God.¹⁹

In an illuminating paragraph Diederichs—and we should remember that this was written when Hitler was a dictator in Germany—redefines democracy.²⁰ The number of individual votes supporting a specific policy does not matter, he says. A democratic government is not one which enjoys numerically superior

support, but one that is representative of the values, ideals, and principles of the nation, in other words, a government that mirrors the "totality of the nation." A national democratic government may consist of one person, or of several; he or they may be elected or self-appointed. The essential criterion is simply whether he or they truly represent the total essence of the nation as spiritual unity. The similarities between what Diederichs says here and what Meyer was to say five years later are striking indeed.

Some of the ideas mentioned above were not further developed or were later abandoned by Diederichs. This general climate, however, became the springboard for the creation of the Ossewa-Brandwag and related movements (such as Oswald Pirow's Nuwe Orde and the anti-Semitic Gryshemde). In addition, Afrikaner nationalism was invigorated tremendously by the Simboliese Ossewatrek (Symbolic Oxwagon Trek) of 1938.

Less than a year after the Symbolic Oxwagon Trek, South Africa was involved in a war with Germany—a war in which the sympathy of the majority of Afrikaners was with Germany rather than with Britain. The secret semi-military Ossewa-Brandwag aimed at the establishment of a South Africa under exclusive Afrikaner rule. As early as 1934 the Broederbond made it clear in a circular to its members that the ultimate aim of the Afrikaner was to rule South Africa. As long ago as 1881, during the First War of Independence, Jorissen wrote: "Let it be from the Zambesi to Simons Bay: Africa for the Afrikaner!" These

¹⁶ A year later Meyer read a paper at the annual congress of the Afrikaanse Nasionale Studentebond in Pretoria, where he developed his ideas in more detail. Cf. "Die toekomstige ordening van die volksbeweging in Suid-Afrika," *Wapenskou* 3:3 (September 1942), pp. 28-37, 50-53.

¹⁷ N. J. Diederichs, *Nasionalisme as lewensbeskouing* (Bloemfontein: Nasionale Pers, 1936), p. 18.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 55-57.

were also the words with which *Eene eeuw van onrecht* concluded, and the phrase was again taken up by P. J. Meyer in his 1941 paper.²¹ The Ossewa-Brandwag, which at one stage had a membership of over two hundred thousand, was prepared to work for this ideal with all means at its disposal. Only one nation could be recognized in a state and the state had to be the vehicle of that nation's personality. In South Africa that nation was the Afrikaner, who claimed a birthright and with whom the English could not expect to be treated on an equal footing. The English had to relinquish their separate existence as a national group and be assimilated with the Afrikaner nation or else emigrate.²² Nobody even bothered to argue that the blacks had no stake in South Africa: this was simply taken for granted.

The excesses of the Ossewa-Brandwag brought it into confrontation with the National Party, under the strong leadership of Dr. D. F. Malan. A bitter struggle ensued until the Ossewa-Brandwag was suppressed in 1944. Despite wartime charges, neither Malan or J. G. Strijdom was Nazi in belief, though staunch segregationists. Details of Malan's successful undercover fight against Nazism inside Afrikaner nationalism only came to light in the 1960s. Many Afrikaners, however, definitely cherished Nazi ideals and sentiments.

Quite apart from the complicated

issue of overt or covert Nazi sympathies, however, it is beyond doubt that romantic nationalism made deep inroads into Afrikaner thinking. In the 1930s and 1940s the conviction grew that the ethnic purity of a nation had a metaphysical base. It was, therefore, divinely ordained and commanded. It is in this kind of thinking that the religious roots of the law prohibiting interracial marriage are to be found. A. P. Treurnicht proudly recalls that the petition presented to Parliament in 1939, pleading for segregation between white and black and for the prohibition of mixed marriages, was the one with the largest number of signatures ever—almost a quarter of a million. He adds: "And at the head of the petitioners was a man of the church. Vader Kestell."²³ It was, once again, representatives of the Afrikaans Reformed churches who, in the 1940s, petitioned first the Smuts government and then the Malan government with requests that such a law be introduced. It was, in fact, one of the very first laws to be promulgated by the Nationalist government after it came to power in 1948.

The Current South African Crisis

The religious roots of Afrikaner nationalism, as it reached maturity in the 1940s and 1950s, are, then, to be traced back to the influences of Reformed evangelicalism, Kuyperian Calvinism, and romantic nationalism. It is, indeed, a curious blend of all three of these, having gleaned from each what best suited the peculiar situation of the Afrikaner.

²³ A. P. Treurnicht, *Credo van 'n Afrikaner* (Cape Town: 1975), p. 78.

²¹ Cf. Meyer, op. cit., p. 37.

²² References in H. Giliomee, "The development of the Afrikaner's self-concept," in *Looking at the Afrikaner Today*, ed. H. W. van der Merwe (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1975), p. 25.

Since the beginning of the 1960s, however, the monolith slowly began to crack and break up. To some extent this came because of the growing awareness of the domestic and international situation, as Afrikaners slowly became conscious of the reality of the winds of change blowing over Africa. Another reason for the breaking up of the monolith was a theological awakening that began to manifest itself among a younger generation of Afrikaners. Most of these came from the Reformed evangelical wing of the Dutch Reformed Church, and many of them were working in and with the black church. The majority of them were, in addition, influenced by the theology of Karl Barth. Since the early 1960s Dr. Beyers Naudé, currently General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches after having been banned for seven years, became the undisputed symbol of theological dissidence in the circles of the Dutch Reformed Church, but there were many others, besides Naudé, who had been challenging the theological support for apartheid since the 1950s, and even earlier.²⁴

These voices were, however, not heeded. During the 1960s, in particular, virtually every voice of protest, whether in church or in politics, in the ecclesiastical or the secular press, was squashed. Those who nevertheless did speak out were ostracized. In the wake of the Cottesloe Consultations (December 1960) the Dutch Reformed Church (Cape Province and Transvaal) terminated its mem-

bership in the World Council of Churches and increasingly isolated itself from other South African churches. Beyers Naudé founded the Christian Institute and became its first full-time director, a step which cost him his status as minister. When, soon after this, he was elected elder in the Parkhurst congregation, the Presbytery of Johannesburg declared the election null and void, arguing that Naudé, in accepting the directorship of the Christian Institute, had "disobeyed the guidance of the *Breë Moderatuur*" (Moderamen of the General Synod). The 1966 General Synod, with one dissenting voice, condemned the Christian Institute as representing false doctrine and ordered all Dutch Reformed Church members and officials to resign from it. Henceforth only official National Party policy and official church views would be tolerated.

During the 1970s the climate began to change somewhat. It again became possible, though still only in a limited way, to propagate alternative political and ecclesiastical paradigms in Afrikaner circles. Meanwhile, however, frustration in the black community had reached breaking point. On June 16, 1976, Soweto erupted in violence, which soon spread across the whole country. Just over a year later (12 September 1977) Steve Biko, the father of the Black Consciousness Movement, died in detention, after having been kept in police cells naked and manacled for weeks. When the Minister of Police was confronted with this in Parliament, his reaction was: "Steve Biko's death leaves me cold." A few weeks later (19 October 1977) several organizations, including the Chris-

²⁴ The two first theologians who have, since the 1940s, been criticizing Nationalist paradigms were Professors B. B. Keet (Stellenbosch) and B. J. Marais (Pretoria).

tian Institute, were banned, many people arrested, and others served banning orders. Violence continued to erupt in the black townships, but was, on the whole, quelled reasonably effectively. White South Africa heaved a sigh of relief: it looked as though things were returning to "normal."

Since last year, however, the entire scene has changed fundamentally and permanently. Violence of both kinds—structural *and* revolutionary—is no longer sporadic; it has become endemic. In the black communities those who are regarded as collaborators with the system are no longer just ostracized; they are executed. The spiral of violence is rising.

The irony is that the year 1985 has seen more fundamental political reform in South Africa than the total preceding period: restoration of citizenship to blacks, scrapping of Influx Control and the passbook system, scrapping of the Mixed Marriage Act, assurances that blacks will be included in decision making processes at the highest level, and so forth. These reforms, however, have not in the least changed the mood in the black community. Why not? For several reasons, I think. First, because these reforms are being introduced piecemeal, in small installments, and not as part of a comprehensive new strategy. Secondly, the reforms are clearly the result of black pressure; so they seem to suggest that pressure should be increased rather than decreased, in order to wring even more fundamental changes from the government, particularly to bring the government to the point where it might surrender

altogether. A third reason is that none of the changes introduced, important as they are in themselves, really suggests that the white minority is willing to jeopardize even theoretically its position of power and privilege. Only two weeks ago an opinion poll revealed that two-thirds of all white South Africans believe that South Africa will *never* have a (black) majority government.

The ruling National Party has indeed become more pragmatic in recent years. The pure and unadulterated expression of classical Afrikaner religio-political thinking is no longer embodied in the National Party. The two ultra right-wing parties (the Herstigte Nasionale Party, founded in 1969, and the Conservative Party, founded in 1982) can indeed claim to be the heirs to that legacy. Still, for all its growing pragmatism, the National Party finds it impossible to break out of the ideological straitjacket it has itself donned generations ago. So we see the realities of present-day South Africa leading the main body of Afrikaners to a curious mixture of ideological motivations and pragmatic considerations. In the final analysis, however, the forces that molded the Afrikaner and Afrikaner civil religion continue to determine Afrikaner attitudes and prevent them from embracing a new paradigm. They are prepared to make concessions but refuse to be pushed too far. While propagating changes and a modicum of compromise they are at the same time developing a Masada complex. The resoluteness of the Afrikaner to fight literally to the bitter end should not be underestimated. Therefore, unless all parties can

agree to meet around a table and thrash out a new political and societal blueprint, and do so very soon, the stage is set for a civil war which may last decades and leave the entire subcontinent in ruins. Whether we will have a negotiated settlement or a long drawn-out revolution is hard to tell. The portents are not too promising; in fact, the gap between white intransigence and black demands seems to be widening.

What we see unfolding, then, truly has the makings of a classical Greek tragedy. The stage for this tragedy is an area as large as Western Europe and most of the millions of actors seem to be incapable of comprehending where they are heading. They "stride to their fierce disasters in the grip of truths more intense than knowledge,"²⁵ captives of their respective histories.

Tragedy, however—so George Steiner reminds us—is by definition irreparable. We remain pawns, turned over to the capriciousness of a malevolent God, to blind fate, the solicitations of hell, or to the brute fury of our own animal blood, which is

waiting for us in ambush at the crossroads, mocking us and destroying us.²⁶ But Steiner also points out that we encounter tragedy in Greek antiquity and in Shakespeare, not however in the Judaeo-Christian scriptures and tradition. I stand in this latter tradition. This means that I am an anti-tragedy person. I am in the hope business. I know of judgment, which is not the same as tragedy. I also know of repentance and forgiveness, of reparation and restitution, of a new life beyond the grave, of a kingdom which is coming. And, of course, I am not alone in this. There are also the Desmond Tutus, the Beyers Naudés and tens of thousands of others; there is still a silver-haired Alan Paton who first aroused our consciences when he wrote *Cry, the Beloved Country*, forty years ago, and who, just a month ago, opened our National Initiative for Reconciliation with a reading from Psalm 130. The night is dark, indeed, but there have always been and there still are the watchmen crying out their messages of hope, reminding us that when the night is at its darkest dawn has drawn near.

²⁵ George Steiner, *The Death of Tragedy* (London: 1974), p. 7.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

The Minister as Prophet

by PETER J. PARIS

A native of Nova Scotia, Dr. Peter J. Paris joined the faculty of Princeton Theological Seminary in 1985 as E. G. Homrighausen Professor of Christian Social Ethics. He is an alumnus of Acadia University and the University of Chicago, and served previously as professor of ethics and society at Vanderbilt Divinity School and at Howard University School of Religion. Ordained by the African United Baptist Association of the Atlantic United Baptist Convention in Canada, Dr. Paris is the author of Black Leaders in Conflict and The Social Teaching of the Black Churches.

Opening Convocation, September 22, 1985

I GREET you all in the spirit of friendship that emanates from the source of our common faith. I identify with many of you who are newcomers to the seminary. The one thing I have found most gratifying since our arrival has been the seminary's ability to make strangers feel welcome. I hope that you have been similarly impressed and that your stay here will be among the most memorable occasions of your life.

Whether laity or clergy, we have all come here in response to a call to the ministry—some are teachers; some are preparing to become teachers; many are training for ministry; many others are spouses and children who are sharing the life of a family member who has been called to the ministry. In other words, ministry is our common ground and I wish to talk about that subject in a way that makes the most sense to me. I speak out of a particular tradition which I hope will become clear in the course of this address.

Let me say at the outset that I think there is nothing more impor-

tant in the entire world than the gospel of Jesus Christ—a gospel that is always at risk because it must always assume some cultural form in every time and place. Because of the limitations of all cultural forms the viability of the gospel depends on its mobility of moving out of old forms into new forms. The preservation and maintenance of old forms of belief and practice are closely associated with the priestly or pastoral functions to which we are all called. The prophetic function is the discernment that the old cultural forms are no longer able to contain the substance of the faith and must give way to new forms. The pastoral and prophetic functions must not be set in opposition to each other and neither should one attempt to choose between them or to rank one higher than the other. Rather, the pastoral and prophetic functions are interdependent. They are related to each other as nurture is related to growth. You cannot have the one without the other. Nurture aims at growth and all growth is based on nurture. Any

attempt to deny one or the other is self-destructive since nurture and growth constitute the basic conditions of all life, including the historical life of the gospel itself.

A more accurate title for this evening's address would be, "The Minister as Pastor and Prophet," but because of time limitations and for the sake of emphasis I wish to focus on the prophetic dimension of the office because I am convinced that the conditions of our day require careful attention to this side of the ministry.

Let me hasten to say that our normative understanding of the nature and function of prophets is rooted in the biblical teaching of the common mission of such religious giants as Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Jesus. It is the essence of prophets to be rooted in a religious tradition without which they have no message. Prophets are not forecasters of the future but mystics, preachers, moralists, poets, and agents who believe themselves to be mouthpieces for God and instruments of God's creative activity in reforming religious history. The prophet is God's spokesperson to a particular situation. God is revealed in the prophet's message as divine justice and the people are admonished to bring their religious and ethical life into conformity with God's sovereign will. Because prophets speak God's word to a particular situation they must have an accurate understanding of that situation. Even a cursory reading of the biblical prophets reveals their deep understanding of the social order. Not only do prophets display profound knowledge of their nation's political

situation but they describe the deeper theological problem implied in that situation.

Prophets teach the people to know and to reverence God as unique in ethical character. That is to say, prophets view God as an actor in history, whom to serve implies discerning and honoring God's presence by living in social relationships that are in accordance with the Divine will. Faithful obedience and loyalty to God in everyday relationships constitute the basis for the community's worship. In other words, if worship fails to express the daily experience of mercy and justice then the worship is judged as a mockery. This is the opposite of what we normally think. It is not so much that worship prepares us for improved moral living but that moral living is a condition for worship. That is to say, the values expressed in worship should have already been practiced in social life. Thus, the peculiarly radical message of the prophets is that God's will is expressed in acts of justice: that God expects people to be just with one another; that worship is hypocritical if the doing of justice is not presupposed in the social life of the worshipper.

What is justice? Justice is the good of the other—not a social nicety alone but what really is the other's good. God's justice is that of saving the people from the destructive forces of evil and sin. True justice is always salvific because it is the other's good and the other's good is always in opposition to the evil that threatens the other's life.

As prophet, the minister embod-

ies the prophetic principle which affirms the sovereignty of God's will over all of history. This prophetic principle views God as active in history but not identical with any historical reality. Rather, this principle contends that God is a living, moving power who relativizes all religious and cultural reality and resists any absolute claims that human beings might make about their thought or practice. In fact, the Bible warns repeatedly that every attempt to give infinite and unconditional status to that which is finite and conditional is idolatry.

Those who stand in the prophetic tradition can never be content with any dogmatic view of their religious or moral tradition because dogmatism resists growth, development, or change of any sort. In other words, dogmatism neglects or ignores the dynamic element that pervades all of life, both human and divine. That which is unchangeable in history is destined merely to become a settled datum in the past which one looks back to as a dead form. Such a datum, whether language, art, thought, or practice fails to be a living force in the present because it has become a relic, and relics belong in museums. The Christian message is always distorted when viewed as an established theological formula which merely imprisons the faith in a particular cultural form. Rather, the minister as prophet must be committed to particular understandings of the Christian tradition while at the same time always suspicious of that tradition and all of its formulations—hence he or she must embody a dialectic of belief and suspicion—

never blindly standing on one side or the other but always holding both in constructive tension.

The prophetic principle is a reformed principle that brings every cultural reality under judgment including itself. The prophetic message in each generation stands in need of continuous prophetic witness. In other words, since the substance of the Christian faith is conditioned by the cultural forms in which it is expressed, and since every new form is destined to become an old form, the gospel must be reinterpreted for every generation. This is not simply a matter of operationalizing a past tradition for the contemporary period but actually giving new understanding to the tradition itself. In other words, each succeeding generation emerges with new concerns and problems and questions. In light of those new issues the old forms in which the Christian tradition was once expressed are viewed as out of date—obsolete. The task of the prophet is to generate new theological and moral insights and to legitimate those insights by showing their continuity with the older tradition. In this way the old traditions are expanded both in thought and practice and something new comes to life, thus expressing the continuing activity of God in history.

One must notice, however, that the professional and institutional custodians of the old forms are always resistant to change and that fact makes the work of prophets very dangerous activity. In fact, it has not been uncommon for prophets to be ostracized and even killed.

True prophets win no popularity contests in their day.

Clearly it is difficult for prophetic ministries to arise in situations characterized by economic and social privilege. Ironically, however, many prophets have come from such privileged social situations but, in the main, most who minister to such situations tend to focus energies on the pastoral functions while neglecting the prophetic witness. As we have indicated earlier, the neglect of the prophetic witness threatens the meaning and power of the pastoral function.

How do we know when prophetic ministry is needed and how do we distinguish between true and false prophets? Since the central message of true prophets aims at bringing social life into conformity with the will of God and since the prophet views the practice of justice in social relationships as commensurate with God's will, every instance of political, social, and economic inequality can become an occasion for prophetic witness. This does not mean that every inequality is unjust. How do we know then when inequality is unjust? The answer lies in the experience of those who are the victims. Like patients, they alone know where the pain lies. They alone raise the question that calls out for deliverance. Their affliction is visible to those who have eyes to see; their cries are audible to those who have ears to hear; their condition is explainable to those who wish to know. Morally and otherwise they can be strengthened by sensitive and courageous assistance from others. In this respect oppressed peoples have always been comforted by the

God of justice who is revealed in the prophetic witness.

The religious and moral dimensions of such contemporary problems as world poverty and starvation, racism, sexism, militarism, individualism can only be addressed by a prophetic ministry which condemns the structures that perpetuate such injustices and calls for radical reform. Be not surprised to know, however, that both explicitly and implicitly there are many Christians who view the dominant political and economic forces of the world today as ordered by God and consequently they stand in opposition to those forces. Unfortunately, in every age Christianity has been prominently allied with societal structures of injustice. Hence, in every historical period Christianity has been in need of prophetic witness and our day is no exception.

True prophets are always allied with the victims of injustice, struggling with them to overcome the evil and to reestablish justice. This does not mean that true prophets are politicians or revolutionaries in any simplistic sense. Rather, they perceive the moral and religious dimensions of the situation to which they have been called to minister. And like God's declaration to Moses, they hear the cries of the oppressed: they see their affliction; they understand their condition; and they name the evil and condemn the sin and proclaim God's will for the establishment of justice. Their rigorous social analysis leads them to prescribe God's justice.

The identification of the Christian message with the absolute claims of the church's magisterium in the six-

teenth century called for prophetic witness which took the form of the Protestant Reformation. Subsequently in the 1960s it took the form of Vatican II.

The identification of the Christian message with the slave trade called for prophetic witness which in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century America expressed itself in the rise of the black church independent movement.

The identification of Christianity with racial discrimination and segregation called for prophetic witness in the late 1950s and early 1960s and expressed itself in the ministry of Martin Luther King, Jr.

The identification of Christianity with apartheid in South Africa has called for prophetic witness which is expressing itself through the moral forces of liberation in that country led by such persons as Desmond Tutu, Alan Boesak, and others.

The contemporary prophetic ministry against Christianity's iden-

tification with patriarchalism is expressing itself through feminist theology. The prophetic witness against Christianity's identification with the interests of the privileged classes in Latin America is taking the form of liberation theology in that context.

And there are many other illustrations of the prophetic witness both past and present. All of these prophetic movements share common elements with the prophetic ministry of Jesus who sought to reform the religion and culture of his day. Many of us have accepted a call to ministry which, I contend, is to continue the ministry of Christ in our day. May God be with you during this time here. May God enhance your faith, increase your understanding, and renew your courage such that you will resolve by the grace of God to be faithful pastors and prophets—never choosing the one over the other, but always diligent in responding to the demands of each.

Bread of Heaven

by KATHARINE DOOB SAKENFELD

A native of Ithaca, New York, Katharine Doob Sakenfeld is a graduate of the College of Wooster, Harvard Divinity School, and Harvard University. In addition to her position as associate professor of Old Testament, Dr. Sakenfeld serves as director of the Ph.D. studies program at Princeton. The author of two books, she has served as a representative to the Consultation on Church Union and to the Commission on Faith and Order.

Opening Communion Service, September 23, 1985

Text: *They set out from Elim, and all the congregation of the people of Israel came to the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they had departed from the land of Egypt. And the whole congregation of the people of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness, and said to them, "Would that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate bread to the full; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger." . . . And Moses said to Aaron, "Say to the whole congregation of the people of Israel, 'Come near before the Lord, for he has heard your murmurings.' " And as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the people of Israel, they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud. And the Lord said to Moses, "I have heard the murmurings of the people of Israel; say to them, 'At twilight you shall eat flesh, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread; then you shall know that I am the Lord your God' " (Exodus 16:1-3, 9-18, 31-34). Therefore, I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you shall eat or what you shall drink, nor about your body, what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? . . . Therefore do not be anxious, saying, "What shall we eat?" or "What shall we drink?" or "What shall we wear?" For the Gentiles seek all these things; and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well (Matthew 6:25-33).*

OH, THOSE foolish Israelites! Only one month out of Egypt and complaining—complaining again. Surely by now they should understand that God will provide for their needs. Earlier, they blamed Moses that they must make bricks without straw, but God challenged the Phar-

aoah and the Egyptian monarch set them free; then they panicked at the sight of the pursuing Egyptian army as the Pharaoh rethought his decision, but God delivered Israel at the Red Sea; then in the wilderness there was no drinking water, and again they murmured against Moses, but

God provided sweet water to drink, and even an oasis with twelve springs.

And now, here they were, worrying about no food, and longing to have died in Egypt where even slaves, they remembered, ate bread to the full. Why, Moses, have you brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger? Here were some folk who really needed to hear Jesus' advice to his audience in the Sermon on the Mount: "Do not be anxious, saying 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'" For the pagans seek all these things; and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all."

Foolish Israelites, short on trust despite their recent marvelous experiences of God's grace and power. Yet perhaps this criticism is too harsh. For people without access to food it is probably human and normal and indeed realistic to become focused upon where the next nourishment will come from. Stories from contexts as diverse as Auschwitz, Ethiopia, and nineteenth-century wagon trains heading for California gold remind us of this reality. It is probably to be expected that starving people create fond memories of times when there was food to be had, memories which ignore or diminish the other troubles of those times. It is probably human and normal that hungry folk affix blame somewhere handy. We should be surprised only if such things did not happen.

Let us then draw back from hasty criticism of these hungry Israelites and attend to the outcome of their complaint. God provides manna,

even though it had not occurred to the Israelites to pray for sustenance. The psalmist paints the picture beautifully:

God commanded the skies above,
and opened the doors of heaven;
and God rained down upon them
manna to eat, and gave them the
grain of heaven. Mortals ate the
bread of angels (Psalm 78).

Moses instructs the Israelites to gather the manna, one omer apiece, a one-day supply for each person. And the narrator reports that, although some gathered more and some gathered less, God had indeed provided daily bread. Those who gathered much had just enough, and those who gathered little had just enough, enough for one day.

Some gathered more. Some gathered less. Our text does not explain why this was the case, but we may guess at some of the reasons. Surely some among the Israelites were physically stronger, and some weaker. Probably some were zealous, hoping to get a larger share, while others were apathetic, not supposing that this odd food supply would make much difference to their survival. Perhaps some were compulsive workers at any assigned task, while others were just basically lazy, trying to get away with the minimum required to meet Moses' instructions. And yet when all the manna was measured, reports the narrator, each had gathered sufficient for the need of one day. No one had too much, and no one had too little. Sisters and brothers in Christ, this is the real moment of abiding astonishment in the story of the

manna: the miracle is not so much that the manna was given, but that it was given in such a way that none had too much and none too little, that each had enough for daily bread.

Of course we modern folk would like to know how this came about, and commentaries are full of theories, just as they are full of explanations of the manna itself. The apostle Paul mentioned this tradition in writing to the Corinthians. He thought the Israelites pooled all the manna they collected and then divided it up. Maybe that is what happened; we really don't know. What we do know is that weakness and apathy and laziness did not prevent God from supplying daily bread, and that strength, zeal, and compulsiveness did not yield more than daily bread. God's gracious provision was bestowed not according to merit or motive, humanly measured, but according to need.

Provision according to need, not according to merit, not according to motive. Provision of what your heavenly Father knows you need; therefore, "be not anxious." A wonderful tale, this manna story; wonderful advice that Jesus gives. But how in this world shall we live by it?

The first day of a new academic year heightens anxieties for most of us, whether old guard or here for the first time. Will I be able to keep up my grade point average now that I am enrolled in graduate school? Can I learn Greek when Spanish was impossible for me in college? How can I find friends to form a prayer group? Will I be able to keep ahead of my own doctoral students? Will I be able to keep up with the typing demands of three more faculty with-

out losing my mind? Will my manuscript be accepted for publication? Will I be able to raise enough capital to pay for the new building program? Will I be able to study for ords without failing my courses?

We are anxious about many things, and for most for us, most of the time, life is organized around the principles that our own efforts will solve those matters about which we are anxious and that more work will produce more results. The motto for our daily living reads: More gathering means more manna. More study yields more information about Augustine or Luther and a better grade on a theology test. More visits to parishes yield more money for the seminary scholarship fund. More books read give a better basis for responding to students' questions. More time spent in prayer means feeling closer to God. Those who preach well pastor the bigger churches. "More gathering means more manna."

But the biblical story reminds us that these assumptions about how life works aren't so obvious after all. Sometimes the student doesn't study what the teacher asks. Sometimes the teacher doesn't study what the student asks. Sometimes the fundraiser's visits produce no pledges. Sometimes the outstanding preacher goes unnoticed in a tiny rural parish. Sometimes even prayer seems to go unanswered. Strength or ability, eagerness to do better than others, compulsive work habits do not consistently produce the results we hope for. The person who seems less able, or apathetic, or lazy—by our standards—comes out just as well as we do. More gathering doesn't yield more manna.

In the face of such experiences we

are called to remember the manna story—the story of God’s provision for each person’s need, not less and not more. Trusting in God’s provision we may begin to experience Jesus’ words, “be not anxious,” in a new way. No longer do we hear “be not anxious” as words of advice, but rather as words of gracious and freeing invitation. Not advice, but invitation: “be not anxious. . . .” God will supply your need, not because of your merit, not because of your motive, but because God’s heart is set in love upon you.

As we come to this Table, our Lord invites you to name your anxieties, to lay them before the One who already knows your needs. Are you anxious about achievement? about recognition? about possessions? about a relationship with some other person—spouse, parent, child, friend, enemy? Hear God’s promise, confirmed for us in the giving of manna in the wilderness and in the giving of this Table: However much you gather, God will see to it that your need is supplied. Accept the gracious invitation: “be not anxious.”

Provision according to need, not according to merit, not according to motive: a wonderful story and a wonderful invitation. Yet even if by God’s grace we begin to believe the manna story and to live by Jesus’ invitation, “be not anxious,” there remains a terrible dissonance. For the manna story and Jesus’ invitation focus primarily and basically on physical hunger. Each of us is anxious about something, even many things, yet few of us need be anxious about malnutrition or starvation.

For most of us here, not too long after breakfast and soon on our way

to lunch, the regular presence of daily bread places this most basic and literal meaning of the manna story far from our experience. Some members of the Seminary community have endured long periods when their next meal was an uncertainty—a single egg as a day’s ration of food; an afternoon meal consisting of scrapings from the bottom of the breakfast cooking pot. But most of us have spent our lives far removed from the horrors we see depicted on television programs about Ethiopia. Our personal experience has given us little basis for knowing what it would mean to trust God, to accept Jesus’ invitation, “be not anxious,” even in the absence of daily bread, in the absence of any prospect of finding food for ourselves or our families and friends. We know little or nothing of long-term begging or scavenging, much less of circumstances in which there is nothing even to beg or to scavenge. Most of us are never hungry except by our own decision—to give up desserts for Lent, or to make our clothes fit a little better, or to get an extra hour to study for a quiz. As we break the bread prepared for us on this Table, we find ourselves focusing most readily and most often on Jesus come down from heaven as the Bread of Eternal life. Our life experience does not press us to associate this Bread of Heaven with the Daily Bread of physical survival. The hungry folk of the wilderness wandering or of Jesus’ audience or of our own time and place are not automatically in the forefront of our communion concern.

What may a story about hungry people physically filled to the full say to us who are already filled? What

may an invitation, "be not anxious," given to physically hungry people mean to us?

The question is not an easy one. But at least part of an answer lies in the ending of the manna story. The Exodus story of the miraculous manna, and its miraculous sufficiency despite the merit or motive of its recipients, ends with the placing of a jar of manna in the sanctuary next to the ark holding the commandments of God. The jar with its manna is to serve as a perpetual reminder of God's provision for the people's needs. But the jar stands alongside the commandments of God, Moses' tablets of the ten commandments, which serve as a perpetual reminder that this is a people called to justice and righteousness. Manna and commandment ever together, the Bread of Heaven enabling our obedience. So also Jesus' words continue beyond his invitation "be not anxious"—"seek God's kingdom and God's righteousness."

And around this Table, where the Bread of Heaven confirms God's constant, day-by-day provision of our needs, is revealed something of the meaning of that elusive phrase, "God's kingdom." Soon we will hear the words of the liturgy: "people will come from East and West and South and North to sit at table in the Kingdom of God." To sit at table in the Kingdom of God. The biblical tradition holds out the vision of a great banquet at which the physically hungry are most especially included around the table. The prophet Isaiah proclaims, "On this mountain the Lord of Hosts will prepare a banquet of rich fare for all the peoples . . ." (Isa. 25:6). Or again,

"Ho, every one who thirsts, come to the waters, and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Isa. 55:1). The gospel narratives of the feeding of the thousands prefigure this great banquet even as they recall the manna story.

The biblical witness, my friends, is that no one will be truly satisfied until everyone is fed. This is the meaning of sitting at table in the Kingdom of God. Jesus invites us, "be not anxious but seek first God's Kingdom." In our gathering around this Table, we may just be able, by God's grace, to become free enough from our own anxieties to begin to respond to the hunger of others. There are as many kinds of hunger as there are anxieties, and we need to be set free to recognize all of them. But our texts speak specifically today of physical hunger. Our texts call us to comprehend, around this table, that seeking God's kingdom means living as though those hungry folk do sit at table with us. Around this table we proclaim that in Jesus Christ God's kingdom has broken into our world; we proclaim that in Jesus Christ the banquet has already begun.

As you partake of the communion elements this morning, picture a hungry person, one who scavenges or one who has nothing to scavenge, sitting to your right and to your left, for they are here at table with us. The banquet has already begun. As we feast on the Bread of Heaven, let us bid our hungry sisters and brothers in Christ's name, "be not anxious," and go forth each one of us to seek God's Kingdom. Amen.

Sin and Guilt in Modern Societies: A Sociological Commentary

by RICHARD K. FENN

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Inaugural Address

IN AN earlier version of the *Book of Common Prayer*, the words of the "general confession" were poignant and, by modern tastes, extreme in their expression of remorse.

We have erred and strayed from
the ways like lost sheep.

We have followed too much the
devices and desires of our own
hearts.

We have done that which we
ought not to have done, and
we have left undone that
which we ought to have done.

And there is no health in us.

But thou, O Lord, have mercy
upon us, miserable offenders.

These are not words that come easily to people who believe that they are basically healthy and can improve their individual and collective lives by various pragmatic strategies. Instead of these anguished statements the modern rite simply acknowledges failure in "thought, word, and

deed"; a fairly matter-of-fact and terse suggestion of the need for renewal and reform.

In any event, collective expressions of remorse have fallen out of fashion. The United States, which used to have a national day of repentance and thanksgiving, has engaged for the last century only in a day of thanksgiving without repentance. The church has failed to supply the rhetoric of repentance that is missing in the political rites of the nation. That failure is all the more remarkable since the American Episcopal Church, at least, saw its life as a reproach to the nation; indeed the Standing Liturgical Commission announced that, "After sixteen centuries since the time of Constantine, the Church is once again placed on a level with the dispossessed and the powerless ..." (Statement to the House of Bishops, October 1972, by Chilton Powell, Massey Shepherd, Charles Guilbert,

and Leo Melania, p. 6). That statement did not mean that the Church had sold its real estate and given away its investment portfolios but simply that it no longer felt it could enjoy the protections of a society that valued its contributions while giving only lip service to its values. Given what the Church thought was its mission to lead its people out of their various captivities, the Church might well have wanted a more searing confession of collective and *national* failure. In this century there are particularly good reasons for a strong statement of collective sadness and even remorse. Why, then, did the Church propose to adopt a more sanguine mood?

There are enough voices on this subject to fill several volumes of lament; one of those voices in particular supplies a *crie de coeur*:

If we must change, why not change to the words of Scripture rather than substitute our own perfunctory admission that we have not done good? The point of the confessions is that we cannot do so without God's help. And in the age of the concentration camps, of the H-bomb, Vietnam, Ulster, universal terrorism, universal disorder, why should we resent a confession of our own part in all these as miserable offenders against the truth of perfection which is what our faith asserts? (Trickett, 1981: 71).

It is a cry for *collective* repentance that could have moved the Church to voice its sorrows in order that one day it may sound a note of common rejoicing. Without a strong expres-

sion of collective guilt, the voice of collective thanksgiving inevitably sounds brassy and self-congratulatory.

Since it considered itself at one with the dispossessed, the Episcopal Church could have led the nation in collective remorse and atonement, for instance, for the lives of Indo-Chinese and Americans squandered in the Vietnam war. Instead the Standing Liturgical Commission decided that the Church is now living in a different "culture" than the one in which the *Book of Common Prayer* was first written (1662) and cited a number of social factors to make their point. For instance, the Commission thought liturgical references to "foe" or "peril" were out of place in a world where dangers are more general or abstract and city streets are lighted at night by electricity (Memorandum 9, June 1970: 3, 35-36). Unfortunately, there is nothing general or abstract about napalm and dioxin; only the terms of American foreign policy speak of abstract dangers like the domino effect, world communism, and credibility.

It might seem that a secularized rite is all that is necessary in a modern society so fragmented and open to continuing exchange. Certainly partial and temporary actions seem to be all that is currently possible in the liturgy as well as in politics. But even modern societies require real transformation if they are to resolve hatred and grievances without action that is both direct and violent. A society that cannot transform cannot promise more in the way of a victory over death than a minor accommodation and a realistic outlook. In the normal course of events, and in rel-

atively good times, such an outlook may be sufficient. On more challenging occasions, a society may need a more transfiguring vision. As custodians of such a vision, the Church could provide needed reserves of faith and hope, but our truncated rhetoric of sin and absolution provides no such vision, no untapped reservoir of courage.

Opportunities for collective aggression have outstripped modern societies' capacities for "collective catharsis" (Fanon, 1967: 145). Granted that demonstrations in the 1960s provided momentary forms of cathartic action in the streets of America. Granted that riots vented passions that might otherwise have destroyed more lives and fewer buildings. Still, the anger and the grievances that build up over many generations and are still remembered in many quarters cannot be satisfied by ordinary social or political action; neither can the mass media help, no matter how many black villains are slain in sagas of outer space. A society that fails to call its authorities adequately to account for their acts generates a profoundly destructive impulse.

Of course, we can see this impulse in the proclamations of apocalyptic sects that the world is facing Armageddon. A more subtle rendering of this demand comes from the conservative religious groups in the United States that anticipate a new era to emerge from Israel's forthcoming confrontations with her enemies: a confrontation foretold in the Biblical record as ushering in a millennium in which God's people shall sit in judgment over the peoples of the world. Some religious communities

operate with a somewhat different notion of how God has judged the world: a more or less "realized" eschatology in which the divine judgment has already been given in the crucifixion and resurrection. Even these latter groups and organizations, however, may tire of spelling out the judgment in warnings and reprimands to the state and call for a trial of faith.

To some it may seem unnecessary to fear a resurgence of militant religion and messianic impulses in modern societies. Indeed, the detachment of individuals from their roles in everyday life requires no theater for special ordination, no extraordinary commissioning. Simply a renewal of one's decision to do one's best will suffice—most of the time—in most organizations. No wonder if the faithful succeed in doing little, since little in the way of the heroic is required of them. The battle with the enemies of faith is postponed to the end-time; the mean-time is a time indeed for moderation in all things. The rhetoric of sin, the *social reality* of sin and absolution, has become quiet and reasonable.

The Secularization of Prophecy: A Few Indications

The secularization of the prophetic tradition, which I have been describing in terms that refer largely to the world outside the church, has penetrated the sanctuary of the church itself. It is paradoxical that the Anglican church, which has maintained in its prayer book an antidote to perfectionism and liberalism with regard to the understanding of sin, has now decided on both sides of the Atlantic to abandon the

phrase, "there is no health in us," from its new rites. It is paradoxical because, as Reinhold Niebuhr (1953 II: 158) points out, it is this phrase that illustrates the Anglican church's grasp of the prophetic tradition, typifies "the spirit of the prayer of general confession," and explains along with "the influence of Christian history" why the Anglican tradition's "prayer-book piety" has been able to resist the "secularization" that I have been describing. "At its best," Niebuhr argued, "it [the Anglican church] manages to combine all facets of the Christian doctrine of grace more truly than other churches" (1953 II: 159). Without this phrase and other similar emphases on the prophetic understanding of both sin and grace, the Anglican church resembles Niebuhr's description: a "compound of liberalistic moralism and traditional piety" (*ibid.*: loc cit.).

The secularization of the doctrine of sin is paradoxical in another sense. On both sides of the Atlantic the liturgical commissions engaged in revision found various reasons for muting the confession of sin: e.g., the new estates won't stand for it; it sounds a dour note in the service of Baptism to refer to original sin and the possibility of damnation. Times had changed also in America, where the liturgical commission wanted to sound a more triumphal note. As I have already noted, the Standing Liturgical Commission, in discussing a traditional petition to save the people of God "from all the perils and dangers of this night," heard that modern amenities had largely expunged the terrors of darkness: the secular city was too well lighted to be a place of terror. The question-

able theology and sociology of the time appear paradoxical in their optimism in view of the twentieth century's record of tragedy and disaster; it was just such a record that moved some, in protesting the softening of the sense of sin in the prayer book revision, to call for a more intense expression of sinfulness. Those, on the other hand, who understood that doctrine, apprehended in faith, precedes "the experience which validates the doctrine," i.e., the experience of "the seriousness of sin" (Niebuhr, *ibid.*: II: 120), argued that the liturgy should not be determined by current tastes and sensibilities. To paraphrase Niebuhr, one might say: those who take neither sin nor history seriously do not realize what has been lost in the liturgical secularization of the prophetic tradition.

The paradox is that in seeking to find a way of speaking that will resonate in the modern ear, the modernizers may well have failed to utter the one word that is most needful to tap whatever residual and latent sense of sin survives underneath the surfaces of a bureaucratically administered society. To put it in terms of the perennial debate between sociology and pragmatism: the ecclesiastical pragmatists, in their preoccupation with the putative social reality they considered modern, failed to understand what is both primitive and universal in social life: failed, that is, in the central task of the church itself. On some level, even the modern individual knows that there is no wholeness or holiness in us.

In a position to speak neither a word of grace nor of profound judgment, the Church has nonetheless

been outspoken in addressing both "issues" in the public sphere and individuals about their spiritual growth and development. In addition to the gap between religious and political discourse, the Church faces a world which is in part its own creation: very serious about the word, about the competence to speak with authority on specific topics, and about the rules for evidence. That world encourages the churches to speak out on the moral dimensions of issues while not exceeding their "area of competence" by specifying "legislative details that turn on technical and empirical findings" (Reichley, *WSJ* 11.25.85: 28). Conversely, in urging individuals to develop themselves and to engage in projects of spiritual growth, the churches still leave the individual as the center and object of concern; the churches connive in forms of self-delusion about the importance of the self. Niebuhr put it very bluntly:

By asserting these contingent and arbitrary factors of an immediate situation the self loses its true self. It increases its insecurity because it gives its immediate necessities a consideration which they do not deserve and which they cannot have without disturbing the harmony of creation (*R53: I: 252*).

If others will only accept what the self cannot quite accept, the self as deceiver is given an ally against the self as deceived. All efforts to impress our fellow men, our vanity, our display of power and goodness, must therefore be regarded as revelations of the fact that it increases the insecurity of the self by veiling its weakness

with veils which may be torn aside. The self is afraid of being discovered in its nakedness behind these veils and of being recognized as the author of the veiling deceptions (1949: 7:207).

In these postures the Church is not likely to bring either individuals or institutions in this society to judgment or be able to speak of forgiveness with authority. Even recommending specific forms of legislation with genuine competence is no substitute for a prophetic declaration of moral judgment on the pretensions and illusions of the powerful; close attention to spiritual growth that leaves the individual still in the center of existence is no substitute for a prophetic pastorate. The question is whether the Church is still able to speak a prophetic word in a language it appears to have forgotten. My answer is in the negative.

I wish to clarify two assumptions before explaining my pessimism. The first is that our understanding of sin depends on the circumstances of our social life. It is a very basic assumption, and yet too easily overlooked when we think of sin as a universal and inescapable human propensity for ignoring or confusing ourselves with God. Our knowledge of the truth about sin may distract us from noticing the changes in what might be called the social reality of sinfulness. What societies take to be sin is, to put it simply, a social product. The Church has clearly lost its monopoly on the production of sin and has been relegated to a relatively minor role at least in American society. Is it a sin to poison the water supply, falsify information on the

dangerous consequences of drugs and chemicals, lie about currency transactions, buy politicians, bomb hospitals on Christmas Day, finance death squads, refuse sanctuary to refugees, or drive whole groups of people to despair? The lack of coherent public discourse and of a clear public answer to that question illustrates the gap that has emerged between what this society understands to be the reality of sin and what the Church knows to be the truth.

That gap—or gulf—allows this society to remain unclear about our responsibility for life and death and to obscure the question of guilt. There are amnesties, presidential pardons, agreements not to contest a decree, and other trivial settlements in public life where the Church might yet prefer to pass judgment and grant absolution. I say “might” prefer because it is one thing to describe some aspect of the world, e.g., nuclear arms, as evil; it is quite another to declare and pronounce them to be anathema to all Christians. The Church seems to prefer to describe and recommend, to suggest and to remind, and even occasionally to exhort rather than to bind and to loose.

My second assumption is that arrangements for the social production of sin serve the interests of certain classes more than others. This also is self-evident. For the past few years, for instance, the public has been focusing on the guilt of Vietnam war veterans: guilt because they have killed, guilt because they may have enjoyed killing, guilt because they have survived while their friends have died for them, and guilt because they have been considered impure by citizens whose hands are rel-

atively clean. Our high culture has produced a literature on the anguish of those who survive; the positive and sensitive work of Lifton not only on veterans but on the survivors of Hiroshima is a case in point. There has not been a commensurate interest in bringing American war criminals at the highest levels of government to trial. What the Christian faith knows to be sin becomes shaped in public discourse into another sort of reality: a personal form of guilt, a human reaction to trauma, a reaction to the loss of social honor, and the experience of the scapegoat. Such definitions obviously provide certain exemptions to those who initially decided on the carnage; the same definitions also provide employment for those who are professionally trained to listen and respond to sorrow, remorse, and anguish. The people get *The Killing Fields* and *Rambo*; one or two who had the most power either get a pardon or sue the media for libel.

Our actions are savage, but our institutions for dealing with savagery are not primitive or powerful enough to define such suffering and tragedy in terms of collective sin and guilt. Other institutions and other interests, from the entertainment industry to professional counselors, have managed to produce a discourse in which suffering ceases to be sinful in either its cause or effect and calls for no lasting interpretation or judgment. Death loses its power to sting the authorities. So much for my assumptions. Let us return to the question of whether the Church can yet provide a rhetoric for collective sin that includes both absolution and judgment.

The course of secularization, then, makes it very difficult if not impossible for the Church to set the terms of public discourse on sin; on the other hand, the prophetic tradition makes it very clear that the heart of all social life, including that of modern social systems, is riddled with sin and subject not only to divine providence but to divine judgment. My argument is simply that the prophetic tradition has itself become too secularized to pronounce such judgment.

My first point is that secularization inhibits public discourse about sin. In the process of secularization individuals become increasingly aware of their obligations to themselves and to others, but those obligations become increasingly limited. Each institution elaborates its own rules in a pattern that is consistent with the most general values of the society as a whole, and those values, in turn, require that the individual take on a limited responsibility and liability determined by job descriptions, professional standards, or public policy. The individual can be trusted to work out his or her own salvation in a way that is either irrelevant to—or at least not inconsistent with—the values of the larger society; religion becomes “private” in the sense of not interfering with one’s duties.

Without consulting the Church, our society can create new roles, determine their requirements, train and recruit individuals to occupy them, set limits on the roles, provide rewards for adequate performance, and determine when final departure from such roles can be called for. Hiring and firing, educating and re-

tiring, planning and administering, creating and dissolving ties are work that can be done without benefit of clergy.

Some authority is necessary for the construction of roles and for the assignment of certain parts to particular individuals, but performances are a mock trial in which nothing serious appears to be happening. The need to solemnize public discourse on sin or guilt in secular societies is therefore hardly apparent. In simpler societies, of course, individual virtue and spiritual purity often met critical tests of courage and endurance, and these tests were also critical for the individual’s own sense of worth and immortality. Tests of prowess in the hunt examined the individual’s willingness to risk death in order to provide the sources of life to the human community; they also enabled the individual to overcome the fear of death. So it was with tests of prowess in battle, in leadership, in mating. Simpler societies also provided ways to solemnize the end of life itself, where the last rites posed the final question concerning the individual’s motives and intentions and shaped the social meaning of a person’s life as a sheep of Christ’s fold and as a sinner of God’s own redeeming.

Death is always painful and generates passions that may shatter communities and families, may estrange parents from children, Jew from Gentile, male from female, and may separate people from their own leaders and traditions; primitive in the passions it generates, it requires the binding of powerful practices and institutions.

Deaths are not finished until the

last word is spoken, and some require more speaking than others; a murder or suicide, for instance, is not done until there is nothing more on the subject to be said or done. Anthropologists (cf. Gluckman, 1965), note the ingenious techniques of divination and of trial that primitive societies even today will adopt to resolve what is otherwise unfinished at times of death. Did a kinsman die "naturally" or because of someone's ill will? Was that ill will conscious or unintended? Was the malicious feeling transmitted through magic or sorcery, through legitimate means or through foul? The dead person's soul, like the matter itself, will not rest until the last word is spoken. In such a society divination would disclose the presence, the source and intent of the magic, and when the rites are properly performed the community could lay to rest its grievances; various rites, from the wearing to the scattering of ashes, would enable the dead and the living to carry on. In a modern society, of course, the autopsy is separate from the trial, and the trial is separate from the funeral; public speculation and recrimination continue because the last word is seldom spoken, a final inclusive judgment on the meaning of certain actions seldom given, and societal pressure for a final test continues to accumulate. Such pressure can eventually shatter the containers of ritual and release hatred and a desire for revenge into everyday social life. *Rambo* and *Death Wish* become serials in a continuing story when justice is never done.

A nation without the capacity to define actions in terms of good and evil, without a coherent public dis-

course that transforms mere actions into well-defined acts, will be unable to bury the hatchet as well as the dead. All actions will be in progress; and the only sign of progress will be the continuing activity: a "peace process" where there is no peace. Nothing is done once and for all. Acts disappear in a sea of actions that continuously pass away. Such a society, as I would define it, in its pure form, is secular; it is the quality of the secular always to be passing away. To the eyes of faith, a world of such continuous transience is headed for death. That is why it is crucial that the Church restore to the public sphere a discourse that can define sin and guilt; our collective integrity and salvation in the face of death depend on it.

Translated into more conventional language for a sociologist, my argument simply insists on the difference between questions of truth and of reality; I stand in a sociological tradition opposed to a pragmatism that confuses the two kinds of question, just as it is opposed to a nihilism that relativizes every social reality and begs the truth question (cf. Durkheim, 1982). The same prophetic attack on pragmatism informed Mills's (1982) attack on John Dewey for his tendency to see social life as proceeding from the interaction of "liberal individuals well endowed with substantive rationality." Mills argued that Dewey placed these hypothetical individuals in situations where they were relatively isolated either from class conflict or from bureaucratic regulation as they sought to arrive at the most appropriate course of action; pragmatism endowed individuals with an imagi-

nary freedom and a hypothetical rationality not enjoyed by the majority who work under pressure or coercion and make judgments endowed—at the best—with purely “formal” rather than “substantive” rationality. The majority of people do not make the big decisions, Mills argued; these decisions are made under the pressure of events in settings where bureaucracies pull and conflict tugs: not in fireside chats or strolls through the woods (illusion) but in internal war carried out in bureaucratic chambers and on the streets (reality). The ideology of pragmatism holds the truth question in abeyance and makes no room for the Church to set the terms of public discourse and to pronounce its own judgments in its own language and in its own precincts on sin, guilt, and salvation. It was this resistance to questions of truth and this vacuum in discourse that moved Reinhold Niebuhr to give such very short shrift to sociologists writing in the pragmatist tradition and to Cooley in particular. The same vacuum makes the churches’ rhetoric of guilt, sin, and absolution seem too elitist for those who apparently have no opportunity for decisions or transgressions.

The Secularization of Guilt and Responsibility: The Eclipse of Sin in Complex Societies

I might summarize these general observations about secularization by quoting Bryan Wilson, the perennial theorist of the secular:

Religious perceptions and goals, religiously-induced sensitivities, religiously-inspired morality, and

religious socialization appear to be of no immediate relevance to the operation of the modern social system. . . . Planning, not revelation; rational order, not inspiration; systematic routine, not charismatic or traditional action, are the imperatives in ever widening arenas of public life (1982: 176-77).

Wilson also reminds us that the achieving of spiritual heights by a religious elite always has the effect of secularizing daily life for ordinary individuals who cannot find in such rarefied religious teaching a rhetoric for the expression of their deepest motives and most fearful impulses (op. cit.: 173). Religious elites make the big spiritual decisions and leave the average individual more than ever confined to the mundane. C. Wright Mills would agree. Under these conditions the churches’ traditional rhetoric for sin does seem out of keeping with the surface experience of everyday life for those who have no big decisions to make.

To make spiritual achievements or political and economic decisions the privilege of an elite hardly enlightens or liberates the individual confined by bureaucratic routines or the highly limited responsibilities of the laity. Managers and professionals, who govern the requirements of a specialized ordering of work, may enjoy “privileged communication” or “sacred” relationships with their clients. But professions and bureaucracies offer little opportunity or scope for individuals to confess what is in their hearts or lay hold of their salvation in the world of work and politics. Certainly secularization has

reduced religion's authority to define the expression of human motives in specific actions.

The more secular the society, the more likely are strong personal motives, the very stuff of the sacred, to be kept private. Watergate became a symbol for American social life, then, not simply because of official lies and theft, but because of official cover-up and stonewalling. It took time to see through the office or role, whether of president or bank manager, welfare administrator or police officer; officials' roles are like "covers" and stone walls. But in the Nixon who resigned from the Oval Office, the nation finally saw an individual who had hated his enemies, had wished to eliminate them, had observed few legal limits on the extension of his office's power, had felt the president to be above the law itself, and had acted as if he had fantasies of indestructibility or near-omnipotence in the use of armed forces for various "incursions." In him the nation saw itself "writ large"; in a president who uses his office to express a hatred thinly disguised by language and lengthily defended by procedural arguments; one realizes that this man indeed "represents" the people themselves in their work and politics to the extent that their roles similarly cover and preserve their own destructive motives and hostile intentions.

It is no wonder that critics have enjoyed a field day in comparing the continuous administration of modern bureaucracies with rituals. For instance, while bureaucrats hold office, clergy hold services according to the Office for Morning or Evening Prayer in the Episcopal Church.

Both types of office must be performed without particular concern for the official's state of mind. Both require that the official in question go literally "by the book" and ignore, so far as possible, the sexual, ethnic, economic, and political characteristics of the people served by the particular bureaucratic or ecclesiastical office. Administration of the sacraments, like administration of the Internal Revenue Service, is regular, continuous, and *insofar as possible* irrelevant to the personal ambitions and hatreds of the administrators. In the administration of large societies, however, there is far more opportunity for hostile motives to shape rational intentions than there is in any ecclesiastical rite which prescribes virtually every word and deed.

Social life not only conceals but expresses motives that may be aggressive as well as affectionate, destructive as well as serviceable to life. Societies and institutions may therefore express murderous impulses without attending to them or without taking responsibility for them. One can act "as if" one is merely doing one's job or official duty when one is in fact acting out one's own hostile or aggressive wishes. By the making of policy one can act impersonally to create or destroy; one can make new categories of persons ineligible for service, or liable for punishment. King David once was censured for his presumptions in enumerating the people in his domain and for eliminating the inconvenient. Who will now judge the state for eliminating from its rolls thousands of individuals who, discouraged in the pursuit of jobs, drop

from official enumerations of the "labor force" or, invisible in the city, drop from the census of citizens?

It is crucially important to solemnize grief and rage, hostility and greed: to allow them to cross the threshold of consciousness where these emotions can find symbolic expression and relief. These passions are no less present for being subliminal in modern societies. In a subliminal state, however, they may be acted out in ways as harmless although incomplete as entertainment and sport, or indirectly in the more harmful routines of the office or marketplace, or through more direct forms of acting out in illness and violence. If the primitive survives in modern societies without being brought to the light in the Church's own proceedings, these destructive motives will cause untold damage and generate equally destructive motives of revenge.

More "primitive" societies do enact, in symbolic form, irrational impulses of self-hatred, envy, rebellion, and murder (cf. Turner, 1969). The "enemy" or "victim" to be overcome or sacrificed may be anyone who threatens the individual's essential supplies of food, protection, self-esteem, and love. More complex societies, however, often provide a more muted expression of murderous impulses. Magical thinking and the impulse to eliminate all competition from one's life do not disappear, however, even when the modern adult learns to speak rationally or appears to take responsibility for his or her own life. The individuals interviewed in such depth by Robert and Ann Coles are haunted by families they have left behind and by a

self that they will never become. Witness also the public fascination with journeys to outer space, and with video games that feature a haunted, pursued creature in a labyrinth. That labyrinth, whether it is a modern maze or the original creation of Daedalus, is still a fitting symbol of the unconscious and its tortuous control of our lives. In the absence of adequate solemnizations, however, individuals find their own personal pathway and absolve themselves of their own guilt. The lack of corporate absolution and of a common pathway leaves the individual with an unprecedented burden of responsibility without either the promise of fulfillment and release or a corporate yardstick by which to measure self-deception.

In relatively simple communities the same people regularly come together at the same time and at the same place for a variety of activities, e.g., for planting, eating, dancing, lovemaking, or the choice of a new leader. Apportioning different activities to different times at the same place is essential to avoid confusion over whether the time is right for sowing or dancing, loving or electing. Certain actions must finish before new ones can begin; actions, in other words, *must* become acts. In these less differentiated societies it is the same with promises and threats, planting and killing, harvesting and giving birth, growing up or growing old. These actions, whether they are words or deeds, are done only when someone, a priest or the people, says or sees that they are done. Parting is done properly only with a blessing; otherwise one leaves without permission or pardon. Until the action

of parting is completed properly, moreover, one cannot go on satisfactorily to the next thing, and the next thing may not prosper.

More complex societies rely more on organizational authority than on custom in employing symbolic markers to determine where people belong and when things will be done. In a modern office building movable partitions subdivide a large space for different actions that may go on simultaneously: play or recreation in one corner, where office-workers are eating or talking; a mixture of work and play near a coffee maker; and varieties of work in a large number of cubicles. The stages of life in a secular society also acquire a variety of flexible markers. The rites of passage vary from abandoning chastity and owning automobiles to becoming confirmed in a religious tradition or taking academic degrees. Who is to say with final authority when adulthood arrives in a modern society? Even maturity does not arrive at a certain time but becomes a lifelong project. We can still trace the patterns by which the young find mentors and the middle-aged train their successors, but the ages for promotion and for retirement vary, and the markers for each age shift in response to economic and political pressures. The transition from life to death also becomes a matter for careful analysis and legislation. New ideas and techniques have changed the popular and legal understanding of when death has occurred or new life begun. Modern societies do have markers for the stages in life, but like the partitions in an office building, the markers are quite flexible. In

the new alternative, *Book of the Church of England*, one of the rubrics says "local custom may be established"; established by functionaries with their own interests, no doubt, with the help of those who are willing to be so ordered. In a society where taboos have been softened into law and custom can be shaped at will, there is no apparent occasion for transgressions to seem profoundly offensive or dangerous.

In a modern society the substitution of separate places for work and play, for schooling and healing, provides organizational strategies for managing such transactions. It was once important to know the time and place for sowing and for harvest, for joy and for sorrow. It is now important to know what is the appropriate context for the range of human emotions that may come into play even in places ostensibly devoted only to one, such as work. The modern stranger is no longer the one outside the ceremonies of the community but one who does not know how to act appropriately. Of course, in these circumstances, the symbolic markers that separate various activities will be flexible and temporary. There is no need for strong language about transgressions when the limits are so variable and transient.

The question finally to be asked, however, is whether this drastic reduction of public discourse on sin and salvation poses any threat to our society. What harm is there in defining the basic tragedies and flaws of human life in terms that lie outside the language of faith? Who suffers if we define sin and guilt in terms of a social reality that is indifferent to whatever the Church claims to

know about the truth? To sharpen the question further, I would ask whether a society which defines sin and guilt in terms that beg the question of truth will suffer serious losses of public trust and commitment. Will such a society encounter conflict from individuals and groups who either take justice into their own hands or seek to impose their own conceptions of sin on the public? The answer to the question, posed in these terms, is clearly affirmative: public trust and commitment have steadily declined over the last thirty years as individuals increasingly suspect the integrity of their leaders and institutions; some individuals and groups are taking the law into their own hands and meting out justice or preparing for a domestic Armageddon; and some religious communities are seeking to impose their own definitions on the public in the absence of public discourse. Nonetheless, the question goes further and deeper; it is how long a society that begs the question of truth can endure and whether, once the question is put, that society can long survive. Unfortunately, the Church seems as unwilling to probe sin or pronounce and declare absolution as it is to pass judgment.

It is tempting to be lulled into a false security by fluid and yet formal, reasonable and yet indefinite organizational arrangements for managing social life in a modern society: lulled until there is an explosion that kills and maims, as in Bhopal (where the Union Carbide plant's eruption occurred) or in West Philadelphia where police bombed the headquarters of MOVE. In both situations the state had its rites for licensing and

inspection: rites that in the Indian case were observed and in the American case suspended. In both cases the state was to provide for safety and warning; in both cases it provided protection. In both cases it is exceedingly difficult to establish motivation and to pinpoint responsibility; in the MOVE case individuals have resigned public office for what have been called "purely personal" reasons. In both cases the proportion of the disaster beggars the imagination; indeed, despite public warnings in the press and legislature, state officials in Madhya Pradesh stated they never imagined the potential for danger. Failure of imagination, ambiguity of motive, indeterminate responsibility, indifferent and irresponsible administration, legality without moral authority, speech without persuasion, testimony without conviction, grief and outrage without satisfaction, and a new generation of fear and hatred: these are the marks of a public discourse that cannot solemnize debate over sin and guilt.

How long can it go on? Indefinitely. A society may die in the meantime, but a social system of sorts can survive. Those who take the law into their own hands will die accordingly; there is indeed an undercurrent of self-destruction in many acts of despair and rebellion at least in this society. In the meantime, who will speak a truth that transcends and even shatters the limits and quiet surfaces of public discourse? Who will reprove and convict, not of maladministration or even manslaughter but of guilt and sin? If limits are abstract, must judgments also be stated in terms only of

high principle or—worse yet—academic abstraction? The truth comes in more homely and accessible terms when it comes at all; that, at least, is what I make of the Incarnation.

Of course, many people still feel relatively trusting of one another, have no backlog of grievances to satisfy, and are relatively confident of their own futures; among them anger and hatred are likely only to simmer quietly, if these emotions become conscious at all. But among people whose confidence is low and whose memories are long enough to recall ancient grievances, relative strangers can quickly learn to mistrust and even to hate one another. These latter emotions are the more likely to disrupt the fragile discourse of work or the marketplace, of politics in the state and even in church, when our language and our rites fail to enable us to come to judgment.

The day may come when we see as relatively mild the widespread disruption of social patterns in the United States during recent years in the 1960s. To be sure, political dissidents interrupted courtroom ritual with disrespectful forms of address or by chanting *Om*. Civil disobedience challenged the sacredness of the flag and of patriotic rites. The counterculture took liberties with grammar and syntax—linguistic institutions already under strain from administrative and technological neologisms. Even rituals of greeting and forms of address were ignored and challenged in the classroom, on the street, and even within the family where patterns of domination by the older generation and by males faced challenges from women and the young. Next time, however,

these emotions may destroy the social fabric beyond repair.

When educational curricula cease to offer a course to follow and become a set of options, the succession of work and play becomes problematical. Too many choices and too few requirements make any achievement suspect; one never knows when one has done enough or what one has accomplished. So long as individuals go quietly from work to play, job to job, and course to course, their underlying doubt and anger at facing a bewildering array of meaningless or hopeless choices need not trouble the public agenda. That hostility may never achieve public importance and may become merely a chronic, widespread disenchantment of the sort described by Lasch as "narcissism."

Certainly in America there is a famine of rite and rhetoric for repentance at the level of the nation; no wonder that some groups still apparently wish that America could rid itself of certain impure elements in the body politic, perhaps through a final and violent confrontation. The nation has reason to fear the revenge of those it has wished to eliminate from its social obligations or has maimed in battle for unworthy ends. Vengeance only belongs completely to the Lord when the past can be completed and finished, done with and undone; transfigured once and for all.

There are indeed sins which require collective expression: remorse over self-deception and repentance for the sin of unbelief. The last few decades have been especially ruthless to national illusions, and nations have been extraordinarily ruthless in

their demand for power and glory in the present rather than in some distant future which is the object of faith alone. Now nations may be tempted to panic and to take divine judgment into their own hands in a

test, a final test. If there is a level at which the collective expression of guilt and remorse is most necessary *and least likely*, however, it is the nation itself.

Learning and Teaching in the Spirit

by D. CAMPBELL WYCKOFF

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THE WORD "spirituality" is not often spoken by Protestants, while the word "spiritual" may mean anything from ethereality to an ethnic religious song. Yet the range of experiences that it connotes in other contexts is not unfamiliar. Currents of quietism and pietism are strong and deep. Exotic as it may seem, much is known of the mystic experience.¹ Worship, prayer, and the devotional life are staples in the Christian life.

When discussion among Protestant religious educators turns to questions of the nature and aims of the enterprise, it becomes evident that varieties of personal religious experience influence the debate as much as any other factors. While not always overtly expressed, they lie back of such questions as whether "religion is taught or caught" and

the role of the Holy Spirit in the teaching-learning event. Because our personal experience in this matter so profoundly affects the ways we learn and teach, this chapter begins with a brief account of some highlights in my own religious and spiritual development. The second deals with the spiritual in education (and its place in the teaching of religious education), while the third identifies some of the elements in spirituality that are important and available to the Christian teacher.

Finding a Way

While not systematically autobiographical, this section traces some of the experiences, distinctions, and formulations that have given depth, meaning, and focus to my life and work as a religious educator.

Basic is an insatiable curiosity and a need to explore. Having explored, one has to analyze and understand. All the time, participation is deepening and commitment is taking hold.² Thus, having been a part of

¹ Anne Fremantle, in *The Protestant Mystics* (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1964), identifies among well-known Protestants sixty-three, selections from whose writings she includes in her anthology. With an introduction by W. H. Auden, it runs from Martin Luther to the present, and includes theologians, philosophers, pastors, reformers, artists, poets, and statesmen.

² Commitment also has the element of loyalty. Josiah Royce's use of the term to express the heart of the philosophy of religion ap-

the worshipping family and congregation as a child and young person, having learned to pray and to conduct worship, there were questions of context, reality, and meaning.

Clarification on some of the issues came with the study of James Bissett Pratt's *The Religious Consciousness*.³ Two distinctions of Pratt's were particularly striking. One was that between objective and subjective worship, as he spoke of "two types . . . one of which aims at making some kind of effect upon the Deity or in some way communicating with him, while the other seeks only to induce some desired mood or belief or attitude in the mind of the worshiper."⁴ The former is "objective"; the latter is "subjective." The church of my childhood had a Calvinist background, diluted by the evangelical piety of the revivals and the gospel song. The church of my youth also had a Calvinist heritage, somewhat transformed by the liberal spirit and the motivation of the social gospel. Both were warm, nurturing centers of fellowship, in which I felt at home and to which I was drawn to give my loyalty. Working through the meaning of all that was going on, what was happening not only in the church, but at home, in school, and in society, Pratt's distinction helped. While worship could not but have subjective meaning, catching up all

of feeling and thought, life and work, it was primarily objective. Worship did not center on me and what was happening within me; it centered on God. It was an act of coming to him, in the company of other members of his community, in an act of listening and serving.

The other important distinction was between mild and extreme mysticism.

... If we examine even superficially the cases of religious mysticism they fall of themselves into two quite distinct types, which indeed blend into each other but are in principle quite distinguishable, and thus form a classification which is both natural and illuminating. The two classes I have in mind might be called the mild and the extreme types. The former is commonplace and easily overlooked, it is to be found among perfectly normal persons, and is never carried to extremes. The other type is usually so striking in its intensity and its effects that it attracts notice and is regularly regarded as a sign either of supernatural visitation or of a pathological condition. ... In these more intense cases of mysticism the simple "sense of a Beyond" develops into the ecstasy and the vision.⁵

peals to me. See his *The Philosophy of Loyalty* (New York: Macmillan, 1908).

³ James Bissett Pratt, *The Religious Consciousness* (New York: Macmillan, 1920). Pratt was in the tradition of Edwin D. Starbuck, George Albert Coe, and William James, but his particular bent in philosophy, and his definition of religious experience, gave him more pertinence and authority for me in this matter than the other three.

⁴ Pratt, p. 290.

The sense of the reality of God, making prayer and worship possible and necessary, then had a name—mysticism. But my experience of God was not extreme nor ecstatic; it was pervasive, steady, and abiding. I could then know myself as a mild mystic.

⁵ Pratt, pp. 338-39.

These distinctions give the act of worship its setting, character, and form. The communal meeting with God has three movements. First, we are called into the presence of God. He meets us where we are and invites us, indeed requires us, to come together in his presence. In our own setting, and recurrently, we share the vision of the prophet, "I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and his train filled the temple."⁶ We, too, sing the chorus of his messengers:

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of
hosts;
the whole earth is full of his
glory.

Confession takes place: "Woe is me! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." Confession is particularly poignant in this setting, "for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." And there is cleansing, as a burning coal from the altar is touched to the lips by one of the messengers: "Your guilt is taken away, and your sin forgiven." Is worship a personal or a social act, then? A very personal thing happens, but in the company of God's people, the participants always being three—God, the company, and the person—or four, if there is a consciousness of God's train as well.

⁶ The biblical passages are from Isaiah 6:1-8. This definitive account of the movements in the act of worship takes place, of course, in an unfamiliar setting. When we read it, as with so many other biblical scenes, we put ourselves in that setting to the extent that we can, and share in the experience there. Then we transpose the experience into our own setting. Thus relevance is achieved, and integrity and authenticity are maintained.

Second, we serve in the presence of God. The service performed by the minister⁷ includes the reading of scripture, its interpretation to this people at this time as the Word of God to them, prayer with them and on their behalf, and the design and content of the event. The whole event, prayer, and the sermon are offered to God. The people respond with scripture, prayer, and song, again as an offering to God. The musicians have the difficult role of assisting in that response in ways that are necessary and appropriate, but too technically difficult for the ordinary worshiper (although in many churches congregational singing has attained an almost professional quality). Thus the musicians' service is in response to the minister,

† "Minister" is a symbolic title. A minister "acts for another as his agent and carrying out his orders or designs" (*New World Dictionary*) and "gives attendance or service; furnishes necessities or supplies wants" (*Funk and Wagnalls*). In *The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.* (1914) that my grandfather used as a ruling elder, the "names expressive of the various duties associated with the pastoral office" were spelled out:

As he has the oversight of the flock of Christ, he is termed bishop. As he feeds them with spiritual food, he is termed pastor. As he serves Christ in his church, he is termed minister. As it is his duty to be grave and prudent, and an example of the flock, and to govern well in the house and kingdom of Christ, he is termed presbyter or elder. As he is the messenger of God, he is termed the angel of the church. As he is sent to declare the will of God to sinners, and to beseech them to be reconciled to God through Christ, he is termed ambassador. And, as he dispenses the manifold grace of God, and the ordinances instituted by Christ, he is termed steward of the mysteries of God (*Form of Government*, Chapter IV, pp. 356-57).

and offered to God on behalf of the people.

Third, we go out to serve God. Having heard his Word, having served him as he requires, having offered ourselves to him anew (responding to his call—our “vocation”—in the dedication of time, talents, and substance to his service), and having received his blessing, we move into the world in mission. “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” Then I said, “Here am I! Send me.”

There is no problem of privatism. An inescapable implication of being Christian is being in mission, having one’s own particular vocation within the shared mission of God’s people in the world. Mission is a matter of sharing the faith in faithfulness, by meeting the needs of others. Those needs are global in scope, including a host of controversial social problems. Personal vocation always has its focus in mission, and partakes of a dynamic personal and social integrity. At the same time, it is mission on behalf of the God we worship and with whom we pray.

The devotional life presented problems until Thomas R. Kelly’s guidance showed what it could be.⁸ Devotional practices that were urged on me seemed artificial and alien, as if I had to primp to meet and serve God. They tended to be subjectively moralistic. Because one fell short, one needed to engage in exercises that would stiffen the character, so I might be unswervingly good and unremittingly useful. Devotional literature invited me to think and say

things that simply did not ring true, and to do things that seemed silly. The whole thing was contrived, listless, pointless, and boring, while prayer and worship were real and vital.

Even after the permanently telling experience of being brought into the presence of God,⁹ and having been urged to read and use Brother Lawrence’s *The Practice of the Presence of God*,¹⁰ I could not get into it. I could practice the presence of God, and had to, in a way that was authentic for me, but I did not find him to be of much help.

The guidance from Kelly came in reading his essay on “The Light Within.” These are the crucial passages:

There is a way of ordering our mental life on more than one level at once. On one level we may be thinking, discussing, seeing, calculating, meeting all the demands of external affairs. But deep within, behind the scenes, at a profounder level, we may also be in prayer and adoration, song and worship and a gentle receptiveness to divine breathings. . . .

Between the two levels is fruitful interplay, but ever the accent must be upon the lower level, where the soul ever dwells in the

⁹ The story of this experience is told briefly in my chapter, “From Practice to Theory—and Back Again,” in Marlene Mayr (ed.), *Modern Masters of Religious Education* (Birmingham, Alabama: Religious Education Press, 1983), p. 92.

¹⁰ Recently, I have come across a version of *The Practice of the Presence of God* that might have been of more help. It is edited and paraphrased by Donald E. Demaray (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1975).

⁸ Thomas R. Kelly, *A Testament of Devotion* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1941).

presence of the Holy One. For the religious man is forever bringing all affairs of the first level down into the Light, holding them there in the Presence, reseeing them and the whole world of men and things in a new and overturning way, and responding to them in spontaneous, incisive, and simple ways of love and faith. Facts remain facts, when brought into the Presence in the deeper level, but their value, their significance, is wholly realigned.¹¹

There is nothing artificial, alien, or boring about this. It is fresh, living, and real. The meeting with God is at both levels, but the meeting at the profounder level is definitive. The devotional life is lived at both levels in faithfulness, but the source of the devotional life is in the depths.

Kelly recommends some special exercises and formulae that have been impossible for me, but gradually I have discovered some for myself, practices that help to keep life trained on God and his will. The main exercise is that of reading and interpreting the Bible as the story of God's presence and work in our midst, a way of looking at history that links past, present, and future. The formulae that I use I forbear to share, because they are my own and because the process of their discovery has been much more important than the words themselves. Furthermore, I am sure that they would strike others as just as useless to them as other people's have been to me.

This is not always the case, how-

ever. Nels F. S. Ferré often opened his classes with a form of a classic prayer:

Come, Holy Spirit, come.
Come as the fire and burn.
Come as the wind and cleanse.
Come as the light and reveal.
Convict,
Convert,
Consecrate,
Until we are wholly thine.
Amen.

As Ferré prayed, the prayer was ours, and utterly real. So much so that I have not hesitated to use it myself in similar circumstances.

Such is the spiritual life that the sense of the presence, the ability to pray and to worship, and thus the power to engage in mission, ebb and flow. Very recently, when I had for some time been in "the valley of the shadow," I took Kelly's book with me on a trip. As I read, it was dead, unconvincing, and useless. I felt put off by his breathless zeal and his unfailing resilience. I told my wife that I had simply brought the wrong thing to read. I looked around for an Agatha Christie, knowing perfectly well that I would be even more bored, that such escape would only deepen my alienation and depression. Dogged, persistent faithfulness is all that I know under such circumstances, so I read on. Previously, I had not paid too much attention to his concluding essay, "On the Simplification of Life." But as I plodded through it, I heard him speak again of the life "hid with Christ in God."¹² I knew what he meant—life

¹¹ Kelly, pp. 35-36.

¹² Kelly, p. 122.

on the two levels, the upper level kept steady and pointed by the meeting on the lower. The disconnectedness that I had been experiencing began to heal. Then he said:

Now out from such a holy Center come the commissions of life. Our fellowship with God issues in world concern. . . . But in our love for people are we to be excitedly hurried, sweeping all men and tasks into our loving concern? No, that is God's function. But He, working within us, portions out His vast concern into bundles, and lays on each of us our portion. These become our tasks.¹³

My reaction now is, "Of course! I knew it all the time." But that morning the words he spoke reawakened the human spirit to the power of the Holy Spirit to correct and energize. Life at both levels was possible again.

The exercises of Bible reading and prayer complement work and worship. Bible reading and prayer are elements in faithfulness at Kelly's lower level. Work is faithfulness at the upper level. Worship partakes of both levels. It occurs at the upper level, but could not take place unless it welled up from the lower. Thus the private, the corporate, and the public are brought together.

Another way of looking at the sources of spirituality is with reference to the means of grace, those characteristic acts of ours through which God communicates his love. The statement of the means of grace with which I have lived is that of my particular tradition:

The grace of faith, whereby the elect are enabled to believe to the saving of their souls, is the work of Christ in their hearts; and is ordinarily wrought by the ministry of the Word: by which also, and by the administration of the sacraments, and prayer, it is increased and strengthened.¹⁴

The ways in which such a concept and practice of spirituality relates to my ways of doing things as a religious educator and as a person who trains religious educators is to be dealt with in the next section. In my case it hinges on the statement of the objective of Christian education to which I contributed, that I have made my own, and by which my work has been guided:

The objective of Christian education is to help persons to be aware of God's self-disclosure and seeking love in Jesus Christ and to respond in faith and love—to the end that they may know who they are and what their human situation means, grow as children of God rooted in the Christian community, live in the Spirit of God in every relationship, fulfill their common discipleship in the world, and abide in the Christian hope.¹⁵

The Spiritual in Education

The essential points in the foregoing section may be summarized in

¹⁴ *Westminster Confession of Faith*, XIV, 1.

¹⁵ From the *Objective of Christian Education for Senior High Young People* (New York: National Council of Churches, 1958). I use the original form, which I consider to be superior theologically and functionally to later versions. The one change that I have

¹³ Kelly, pp. 122-23.

a less personal way. Worship is of a God who is there, inviting and calling into service. It is therefore objective, though with important subjective concomitants. A mild mysticism is possible in which there is a clear sense of the presence of God. This sense of the presence makes worship, prayer, and the devotional life possible. The devotional life is lived on two levels at once, an upper level in which life's ordinary affairs are pursued, and a lower level where one is in the presence of God. Assisted by the means of grace, which help to link the two levels, the devotional life, even though it has its ups and downs, its comings and goings, is continuous, not spasmodic. Faithfulness is characteristic of life on both levels, faithfulness to the "breathings of the Spirit" on the lower, and faithfulness in vocation and mission on the upper.

To state the objective of Christian education, as has been done, points to the close connection between the spiritual life and the work of the religious educator. At the heart of the learning act are awareness and response, which are also characteristic of the spiritual life. As awareness deepens and response becomes more mature, the possibility of living in the Spirit of God opens, fed through the roots of growing experience in the Christian community. Orientation to self and world, faithful discipleship, and the perspective of the Christian hope follow. Since the teacher is first of all a learner, the pursuit of the objective is for the re-

ligious educator a process of learning in the Spirit. As that learning takes place, the spiritual life deepens, and its dynamics may be examined. The clues are then at hand for teaching, which is the guidance of learning.

The Spiritual Life and the Aesthetic

Some years ago, American education experienced a surge of interest in what were called "moral and spiritual values."¹⁶ Since sectarian religion was not appropriate for the public schools, some substitute had to be devised in order that the schools might fulfill their responsibilities to such ends as character building and public morality. The "moral values" side was pretty clear, but "spiritual values" were puzzling. My own puzzlement was somewhat allayed when it dawned on me that what was meant was special attention to aesthetic sensitivities, and that the scope of interest included literature, art, music, drama, and dance. Spiritual awareness in a generic sense was then tied to experiences of aesthetic growth.

While such values, even when specifically religious references were included, seem somehow to be generally acceptable in a non-sectarian context (as when a high school choir sings Bach's *Magnificat*), they are even more at home in religious education. It is strange, when religious

¹⁶ The focus was a national study that produced the book, *Moral and Spiritual Values in the Public Schools* (Washington, DC: Educational Policies Commission, National Education Association, 1951). The philosophical prototype for values as substitutes for religion is John Dewey's *A Common Faith* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1934). It was from this emphasis that "values clarification" sprang.

made, which in no way changes the sense of the statement, is to substitute "children" for "sons."

education characteristically makes use of the arts, that so little critical work has been done on the dynamics of art in the process, so little attention is given to criteria for its selection and use, and so much that is relatively worthless and sentimental is allowed to dominate. Of course, its quality and use vary, with music probably receiving the greatest critical attention. Much more needs to be done, since the arts function, among other means, as channels for spiritual sensitivity:

Serious art traps us into occasions for deepening our perception of reality, widening our experience and empathy for people, and engaging our faith with the difficult moral issues of the age.¹⁷

F. David Martin isolates three elements as the nucleus of the religious experience: "1) uneasy awareness of the limitations of man's moral or theoretical powers, especially when reality is restricted to what can be known primarily by means of sensation; 2) awe-full awareness of a further reality—beyond or behind or within; 3) conviction that participation with this further reality is of supreme importance."¹⁸ Further, religion is characterized by feelings like ultimate concern, reverence, and peace, together with such forms of expression as the theoretical (formulations of belief), the practical (ritual,

cult, and worship), and the sociological (institutions). But the grounds for such feelings and forms of expression are to be found in the aesthetic:

The awareness of these empirical grounds is made possible through a particular kind of aesthetic experience—what I shall call a "participative experience." In the participative experience self-consciousness is lost and we become completely absorbed in the empirical grounds. Through this participation we have our only direct access to "a further reality." Indeed, without the participative experience the religious experience is impossible. A deeply felt participative experience, furthermore, is an awe-full awareness of this further reality, and such awareness inevitably is accompanied by belief in the supreme importance of participating with this further reality and by such feelings as ultimate concern, reverence, and peace.¹⁹

Clearly, however, the aesthetic, focused in the participative experience, while providing the grounds for the religious experience, is not the whole experience. "A deeply felt participative experience, wedded to some explicit cognitive understanding of the sacred and an ultimate moral commitment and a community of worship would be a complete religious experience."²⁰

The steps through which the aesthetic moves from the secular through to the complete religious ex-

¹⁷ From a review of "Save the Tiger" in *Spectrum* (New York: Department of Educational Development, National Council of Churches, 1973).

¹⁸ F. David Martin, *Art and the Religious Experience: The "Language" of the Sacred* (Lewisburg, Pennsylvania: Bucknell University Press, 1972), p. 26.

¹⁹ Martin, pp. 26-27.

²⁰ Martin, p. 27.

perience are analyzed in Heideggerian terms:

An experience in which only beings come to explicit consciousness is ontical or secular. An experience in which *Being-as-immanent* also comes to explicit awareness enters the ontological or religious dimension, but it is not religious. When there is an awe-full awareness of *Being-as-immanent*, then *Being-as-transcendental* is more or less vaguely suggested as the source of this experience. This experience is implicitly religious. When, furthermore, there is an explicit awareness of *Being-as-transcendental*, the experience is explicitly religious in the narrow sense. If, finally, theoretical, practical, and sociological forms of expression are involved with this explicit awareness of *Being-as-transcendental*, then this experience is religious in the broad sense.²¹

These steps indicate an intensification of the spiritual that fuses with the other elements at the point of completion. Justification for the use of the term "spiritual" in this connection is to be found in the fact that "*Being* in sensible reality is experienced as a presence rather than being inferred and reified from sense data."²² Or as Martin puts it elsewhere, "The thing thinks in me."²³

No summary can do justice to Martin's subtle analysis of the religious experience through music, painting, literature, and architec-

ture. In brief, however, he sees the possibility of the experience of *Being* in music as a presence anticipatory of the future, in painting as an immediate presence, in literature as a presence drawing in the past, and in architecture as a presence experienced as the creation of a space that represents ultimate meaning in some way. In all cases, the experience can be merely ontic, or it may reach the level of *Being-as-transcendent*. "The subjective aim of every experience is beauty. . . . The lure of beauty is embedded in reality as the persuasion of God."²⁴

The Arts in Religious Education

After many years of preparation, I instituted a seminary course on the arts in Christian education, in which I included experiences in literature, painting, music, drama, and dance. Most such courses, I am afraid, consist of training in the use of finger painting, clay modelling, storytelling, and creative dramatics for children, on the theory that expressive and creative activities are attractive to and healthy for them. They do not get very far with teachers-in-training, in assisting them with participative experiences of their own. Working from concepts like Martin's, I wanted this course, by contrast, to provide experiences with the arts for the seminary students themselves, by which their religious experience might be enriched, their spiritual sensitivities expanded, and their faith deepened. I made it clear that the experiences were for them, and that if they reached the point of wanting to devise ways of involving

²¹ Martin, pp. 34-35.

²² Martin, p. 42.

²³ Martin, p. 90.

²⁴ Martin, pp. 85-86.

others, that would be an incidental bonus. The objective of Christian education was the objective of the course, and it was implemented by the use of the "learning tasks model" (exploration, discovery of meaning and value, personal appropriation of that meaning and value, and assumption of personal and social responsibility).

A sampling of the experiences will give some idea of how the course was developed. A large picture of Ernst Barlach's "Floating Angel" was shown. This "angel of death" is a life-size sculpture of a cloaked human form, head raised and eyes closed, impassive, floating horizontally (suspended on chains from high above) over the black marble memorial tablets to the dead of World Wars I and II, in the Antoniterkirche in Cologne. With just enough comment to provide context, we gazed at the figure, face-to-face, for a long time. With long pauses for spontaneous responses, or for silent reflection, and still looking at the figure, I slowly introduced these questions:

What do you want to ask about it?

How do you respond to it?

COGNITIVELY—What ideas does it prompt?

AFFECTIVELY—What emotions, feelings, passions, does it prompt in you?

MOTOR—What are you impelled to do? How do you find your body responding to it?

SPIRITUALLY—What is suggested that is unspoken, invisible, ineffable, transcendent, ultimate?

MORALLY—In what ways does it challenge you to decision and ac-

tion? To the elements, and to the whole?

In what sense, if any, are you in the presence of the beautiful, the true, the spiritual, the good?

What might the artist say about it?

What style is it? Does it (would it) help to know?

Make a statement—any statement that seems correct and appropriate—about it.

During the same session, slides were shown of Barlach's drawings of Russian peasants, using a meditative script designed to enhance perception of the drawings and to link their pathos to the suffering of Christ on the cross. With Barlach's drawing of the suffering Christ before them, the final words the class heard were:

... He hangs on the cross, in final solidarity with humanity. With a world anxious for its future, living without a past. With a world governed by hunger. By hunger and war. With a world that dupes itself and does not know where to go for shelter from the storm. God comes into the midst of this world. This world is God's. The lay of the land is God's, where peace is possible. And justice. Because God is present. *Ecce homo*—see, God became human.

For one session, we read Heinrich Böll's novella, *The Bread of Those Early Years*,²⁵ the simple story of a young man, Walter Fundahl, in

²⁵ Heinrich Böll, *The Bread of Those Early Years* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1976). Originally published in Germany in 1955.

postwar Germany, without anything but a job, a room, raw memories, and a perfunctory tie to the Church, who is jolted alive by the arrival of a girl from his home town. Bread is the central symbol. He buys and eats it compulsively. We read and reflected on particular passages, the locales in the story, particular people, and then the book's themes and symbols (time, colors, pictures, death, the new life, bread, value in relation to need, theft and atonement, presents, sacraments, annunciation, epiphany, conversion, marriage, food and drink). We stopped to think about Michael Novak's remark:

The point of criticism—or at least one point—is to lead the way, through systematic reflection on a work, to experiences and insights and judgments, and decisions which affect the quality of one's life. The point of literature is twofold; it is to satisfy the contemplative instincts of the mind, but also to seduce one into an ever more adequate liaison with life. . . . A book is only black marks on a page until a human being recreates it.²⁶

At the end of the session, we gathered around a table on which hard rolls were heaped, along with jars of blood-red jam. We took the bread, broke it open, smelled it, tasted it, daubed the jam on it, and ate it. ("Don't be too elegant about it—Fundahl wasn't.") Finally, we read John 6:28-35 ("I am the bread of life") and prayed:

²⁶ Michael Novak, introducing William Faulkner's *A Fable* (New York: Signet Classics, 1968), p. viii.

All things are new by thy grace, Lord God, and old things pass away. Break our hold on familiar things that thou dost discard, and give us forward-looking courage to reach toward wiser ways. Lead us beyond ourselves to the new life promised in Jesus Christ, who is first and last, the beginning and the end. Amen.

During another session, we viewed the film version of Brian Moore's *The Catholics*. Near the end of the present century, the Roman Catholic Church is in sensitive ecumenical discussion with the Buddhists, but in an isolated monastery off the coast of Ireland traditional practices are being cultivated, and are receiving a worldwide response that proves to be an embarrassment to the church at large as it seeks to modernize and become more ecumenical. A young deputy of the order is sent to bring them into line. The film took us through the painful, yet in the long run tragically beautiful, encounter with the abbot, who has secretly taken refuge in work after a loss of ability to pray, and with the monks, who exhibit everything from lofty and stubborn traditionalism, through simple faith, to unbalanced loyalty.

After the showing, it was clear that we were so moved that no one wanted to talk, so we put off any discussion until the following week. At that time, we shared reflections. "I empathize with the abbot, with the deputy, and with the monks. I see more clearly in some of them my own struggles and convictions as a Christian. The church is made up of

all kinds: persons of faith; persons of doubt; the naive; keen intellects; idiots; laborers; innovators; traditionalists; the mentally unbalanced; the stubborn; the argumentative; mediators. . . . I become more deeply involved in the church. . . . I have to face key issues and themes: ecumenism, tradition and change, authority, integrity, personal faith, the real presence, doubt, the church and the world, heresy, unity, political power, miracles, social action and revolution, conscience, sin, accommodation, communication, worship and prayer and the sacraments, the character of the Christian life, contemporary decision makers, the secular mind, expediency (I follow orders, but I am wrong to tamper with others' faith), living with decisions, power and the powerless, bureaucracy. . . . My experience with religious symbols is deepened: advent and ascension, fish and fishermen, the lamb, the rock, the storm, the descent into hell."

The sessions on dance, conducted by Nancy Wright, were almost totally experiential. It was simply pointed out that in worship and liturgy we use our bodies in free and stylized ways, that children and young people spontaneously use bodily movement to express feelings and ideas, and to create meaning, and that these are, in a basic sense, dance. Then the class was led, beautifully and easily, into dance itself. Perhaps no other activity so demonstrated the way the participatory experience effects complete absorption and loss of self-consciousness. It became quite necessary to pray in some such vein as:

O God, thy greatest apostle, on Mars Hill, in the center of the ancient world's art and culture, proclaimed that in thee we live and move and have our being. Our response to thee in love and gratitude has always been one of life and movement that go to the heart of existence. We thank thee for the grace of movement by which to come to thee and to express our gratitude and hope. Amen.

Since the sessions were designed according to the learning tasks model, I felt responsible, as a teacher of teachers, to make this explicit from time to time. Periodically, therefore, I used a form of "queries," which like Quaker queries might be answered by each person silently, or might be spoken to, if anyone chose to do so. One form was as follows:

EXPLORATION

In what ways did we explore? With what results? What exploratory experiences are particularly appropriate to the arts, and to the Christian with the arts?

DISCOVERY

What meanings emerged? As the result of what kinds of experience, activity, effort?

What values emerged? As the result of what kinds of experience, activity, effort?

In what ways do and can these meanings and values enrich and enhance the Christian's faith experience?

What experiences of discovery are particularly appropriate to the arts, and to the Christian with the arts?

PERSONAL APPROPRIATION

What options are before us, as Christians learning and growing in faith, for appropriating or rejecting these meanings and values? How may these options be exercised?

ASSUMPTION OF PERSONAL AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

What forms of individual and corporate action are appropriate in the arts, and to the Christian with the arts? Which of these are we to undertake? In what ways? With what expectations?

Spiritual Life on the Campus

I am sure that the richness of spiritual life on the campus is underestimated. The chapel is its center and focus. But were we to try to fathom what lies beyond that, we would be led into an endless exploration of private Bible study, private prayer, dialogical conversation, counseling, office conferences, conversion, spontaneous meetings of spiritual life and prayer groups, stewardship enterprises, social action projects, evangelism, witness, mission, and helpfulness to persons in need. The teacher probably knows very little of what is really going on.

Yet the teacher brings to the campus a personal spiritual life, and it grows and is enriched there by interchange, both formal and informal. Fundamentally, the teacher comes as a growing and learning Christian, nurtured and active in the church, with a particular vocation, engaged in mission, and making "diligent use of the means of grace."²⁷ What are

some of the specific manifestations?

First, the teacher is one who hears, lives in response to, and teaches the Word of God. The Word is studied under the guidance of the Spirit, both in being attentively present when it is publicly proclaimed, and when it is read and studied in small groups and privately. This is a spiritual as well as an intellectual task, for "we acknowledge the inward illumination of the Spirit of God to be necessary for the saving understanding of such things as are revealed in the Word."²⁸

When classes are so scheduled that significant blocks of time are available (as in summer sessions), I have, from time to time, invited classes to engage in Bible study. A passage is read. There follows a period in which the context of the passage is briefly developed, together with whatever exegetical work needs to be done. Then the class reflects on the passage personally and in silence, letting the silence be broken by the offering of insights that come in a spontaneous way.

Second, teaching is done in awareness of the integral relation of the font, the table, and the class. Baptism is "a sign and seal of ingrafting into [Christ], of remission of sins by his blood, and regeneration by his Spirit; of adoption, and resurrection unto everlasting life: and whereby the parties baptized are solemnly admitted into the visible Church, and enter into an open and professed engagement to be wholly and only the Lord's."²⁹ Arresting as this is, the experience of many in the church, once baptized, is that of being passive on-

²⁷ One of the traditional questions put to confirmands is, "Will you make diligent use of the means of grace?"

²⁸ *Westminster Confession of Faith*, I, VI.

²⁹ *Westminster Larger Catechism*, answer to question 165.

lookers as the sacrament is administered to others. The alert Christian teacher knows that passivity in this event is inappropriate, and engages in two sorts of activity. First, there is the assumption by the members of the congregation of responsibility, along with the parents, for bringing up the child "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Second, this is an opportunity for engaging personally in "the improvement of baptism," a process of reflecting upon the meaning of our own baptism, evaluating our faithfulness, strengthening our grasp on the promises of grace and reconciliation, and renewing our sense of vocation and mission.³⁰ The teacher is one who comes to the students with the consciousness of mutuality in baptism and its improvement.

The Lord's Supper is the time of our fellowship with Christ and our fellow members, and of our formal renewal together. It is to be prepared for by careful and thorough self-examination, which may be done together in a preparatory service. Taking the elements is the occasion for "spiritual renewal and growth in grace . . . confirmation of union and communion with Christ . . . testifying and renewing our thankfulness and engagement to God, and mutual love and fellowship with each other, as members of his mystical body."³¹ Teacher and student meet, formally and informally, conscious of having been to the table together.

Third, the class is conducted in an atmosphere of prayer, since the partners to the educational transaction

are the learner, the teacher, and the triune God. Ferré speaks of God as educator, Christ as exemplar, and the Holy Spirit as tutor:

All of creation is a pedagogical process for learning to know God's love and to live it. The only need and purpose we know for creation is for God thus to teach through it. . . . When God is understood as Educator (not, obviously in the final reality of his nature as Father or the final relation of God as Spirit, but with respect to creation and history as pedagogical process) Christ the Savior can best be understood as Exemplar, as the very meaning and motivation of the life of learning love itself. Christ the Exemplar shows us the Father and makes available the Spirit. He is God's concrete educational demonstration not only of what life is all about but also of the way to learn it. In like fashion the Holy Spirit becomes understood as Tutor. He is God's active educator who takes of "the things of Christ" and leads us into all truth. The Holy Spirit, in whatever capacity or manner of functioning, uses world history and nature as the general education that prepares for the fuller school of Christ within the Christian community.³²

As to that "fuller school of Christ":

The church cannot create Christian community apart from the

³⁰ See the answer to question 167, "How is our Baptism to be improved by us?" in the *Westminster Larger Catechism*.

³¹ See the answer to question 168, in the *Westminster Larger Catechism*.

³² Nels F. S. Ferré, *A Theology for Christian Education* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1967), pp. 210-11.

Holy Spirit. The living of the present in creative discovery depends upon the acceptance of the gift of the Holy Spirit. The very nature and reality of the church can be experienced as real and compelling only within participation of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the living and witnessing of the church school end in the worship of God and the work of the world, and both in the Holy Spirit. Worship is indispensable, for what we learn of Christ and his church is the very meaning and power of the Holy Spirit for community in God for the world. Worship is and leads to the finding of such reality. Work carries out authentically the meaning and motivation of this worship. . . . There can be no authentic Christian education that does not discover and make available the reality of the Holy Spirit.³³

If teacher and student are to participate in and lead that "fuller school," their relation in the seminary classroom and on the campus has to create a prayerful milieu of learning.

It is customary in our seminary to open classes with prayer. The challenge is to make this an experience of mutuality and self-revelation in the presence of God. That requires some spontaneity, but also careful preparation. Earlier in the chapter several prayers used at the end of class sessions have been cited. Here are some that were used to open sessions:

At the first session of a class

O God, as we begin a new semester, we pray for a renewal

within ourselves of thy vision of who we are and what we are called to be. Challenged to "put ourselves together" to minister on behalf of the gospel, we know that it is thou who dost guide and direct, whose will alone is good, and who dost empower those who are called to thy service. For these graces we pray, in Jesus' name. Amen.

At a time when everything seemed at sixes and sevens

O God, there are so many things tugging at our time—study, work, community responsibilities, family life, friends old and new, church, play, ambitious plans, and nagging interruptions and frustrations. Sometimes it is hard to know where we are and what we are doing. Sustain us with a clear sense of direction and a knowledge that all things work together for good to those who know themselves to be loved by thee. In Jesus' name. Amen.

When tragedy came

O God, who art Lord of the unexpected—blessing and tragedy, bounty and want—we do not presume to try to understand the suddennesses of life, and what we cannot understand we leave in faith to thy providence. When change and disruption come, teach us to trust in thee and to rehearse again the great stabilities of thy reign—goodness, truth, righteousness, and love. In faith we ask for faithfulness as life and death emerge around us. In Jesus' name. Amen.

One summer, visiting another seminary to teach an introductory

³³ Ferré, p. 170.

course, I found that the members of the class came from an unusual variety of places around the country, and from many different church backgrounds. By the time the course was over, I found it appropriate to make a revision of John Oxenham's hymn, and to conclude with a prayer that might catch up where we had been, where we were, what we had become, and our sense of the future:

In Christ there is no east or west,
In him no south or north,
But one great fellowship of love
Throughout the whole wide earth.

In him shall true hearts
everywhere
Their high communion find.
His service is the golden cord
Close binding humankind.

Join hands then, friends, in
Christian love,
Whate'er your name may be.
Who serves my father here and
now
Is surely kin to me.

In Christ we meet from east and
west,
We meet from south and
north.
All Christly souls are one in him
Throughout the whole wide
earth.

O God, we come to the end of our
time together, and our minds and
hearts, entering into thy stillness

and peace, roam back over what
we have seen, known, and done.
With some misgivings, yet with
great anticipation, we look for-
ward. But in thy presence now,
we rejoice. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Faithfulness is the outgrowth of a spirituality rooted in the use of the means of grace, and faithfulness fruits on both the lower level of standing expectantly in God's presence and the upper level of life's everyday pursuits. Faithfulness in prayer and faithfulness in teaching go together. As one prepares to teach, as one teaches, and as one reflects on what has transpired, the whole action rests quietly on a sense of the presence. Often, too, one cannot really predict at what point in the process, the sense of the presence leaps into an overpowering awareness of who I am as a learner and teacher in the Spirit, and who my students as learners and as teachers-to-be are in that same Spirit.

Back of the learning and teaching act there is a faithfulness in vocation and mission, part of which is a deep commitment to the discipline of religious education. The development of the discipline is also a work of the Spirit, calling religious educators together to examine their task and the ways in which it may be best understood and fulfilled. For the religious educator it is a demanding and lifelong pursuit, but one in which the Spirit guides, supports, and corrects.

Growing up on Campus

by JAMES R. BLACKWOOD

A native of Princeton and son of Andrew W. Blackwood, James R. is an alumnus of the College of Wooster and Princeton Theological Seminary. He has served pastorates in Missouri, Ohio, and Florida where presently he is minister in Siesta Key. In 1965 the College of Wooster conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Divinity (honoris causa). Mr. Blackwood is the author of four books, including a biography of Professor Howard F. Louvy.

Princetoniana

A SIX-CYLINDER Buick nosed through winter fog. We rolled down the windows and stuck our heads out either side, but it did no good, and we rolled the windows up again. From long experience with father at the wheel, three boys held their breath and kept their mouths shut, hoping to avoid disaster. In a nutshell, father drove impulsively. He did not pass a car on the straight-away if he could manage it on a curve or hill. His hand signal gave no warning whether his next maneuver might be right, left, or a screeching halt. He disdained a wasteful second gear, preferring to lurch directly from low to a stuttering third. What's more, he had a penchant for "the right general direction," meaning that he consulted a map only as a last resort, checking to see "where we missed the turn."

Our trip to New Jersey had been hectic. On this foggy morning of 15 January 1930, therefore, it came to me as a shock when an older brother spotted a marker at the roadside, and exclaimed, "PRINCETON!"

For the first two days and nights in Princeton, our family stayed as guests in the home of Dr. and Mrs.

Charles R. Erdman, on the site of the present Erdman Hall. Dr. Erdman was gracious, dapper, and well-dressed, with a glowing face and sparkling eyes; he had a pleasant word for every occasion, an inexhaustible fund of anecdotes, and a perpetual, rosy smile. His wife suffered from a hobbling ailment. Only now and then did Mrs. Erdman force a smile against her chronic pain. She was shy yet aggressive, abrupt, outspoken, and likeable in her gruff way. Obviously this couple made a study in contrasts. Yet both of the Erdmans genuinely welcomed us to their home, and acted as if having five extra people in the house were a trifling matter.

Dinner at their table was formidable for a boy of eleven. I didn't know what to do with all the silverware. Knives, forks, and spoons lay on either side of nested plates like boats docked at a marina. I knew a butter knife when I saw one. The butter itself, however, was concealed under a silver lid. When someone asked me to pass the butter, I couldn't find it, though it was directly in front of me. Then, too, I had never seen a fingerbowl, and

didn't know what to do with one, or with the doily under it. These formal meals I survived only by taking sidelong glances at mother. Whatever she did, I did, awkwardly and tardily.

Meanwhile, moving vans that carried our household goods crept up on Princeton as if to take it by surprise.

Dr. Andrew W. Blackwood, Sr., my father, had been teaching at the Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. At Princeton he became the first professor appointed after the Machen split. He had written two books, *The Bible: Genesis to Esther* and *The Prophets: Elijah to Christ*. For the next twenty years on the seminary campus, he kept writing books at the rate of close to one a year, among them *Preaching from the Bible*, *The Fine Art of Worship*, *The Funeral*, and *The Preparation of Sermons*. These became standard texts.

Our new home, a massive, red-brick citadel at 60 Stockton Street, is no longer there. It was torn down to make space for a parking lot in back of the Speer Library. At the time, however, it loomed on one side of a circular, gravel drive, a balancing residence to a second massive, red-brick house that remains at the corner of Stockton Street and Library Place. Dr. Sam Craig, an outspoken critic of the Seminary, lived across the intersection in a similarly massive, red-brick house, even larger, perhaps, than the other two. From this neighboring citadel he fired editorials blasting the Seminary and all its works.

Just around the corner were two homes in which Woodrow Wilson

had lived in his Princeton years. A few blocks away stood the former home of Grover Cleveland, whose widow, remarried, still graced the town. Directly across from us was a home where a winner of the Nobel Prize for literature would soon be moving—Thomas Mann, the German author, who had written *Buddenbrooks* and *The Magic Mountain*, with his *Joseph* cycle then breaking into print.

Diagonally across the way was Morven, historic Princeton's "most historic mansion." Richard Stockton, signer of the Declaration of Independence, had lived there. In front of Morven an old, gnarled catalpa tree—patched with cement, daubed with tar, supported by props, and held together with metal tie-rods—grew near the street. A bronze plaque set in its trunk noted that this tree had blossomed on 4 July 1776.¹ A few months later in 1776, when British troops occupied Princeton, Lord Cornwallis made Morven his headquarters. After the Revolution, the Continental Congress met at Nassau Hall. Elias Boudinot, president of the Congress, stayed at Morven, and many of his fellow patriots came to see him there, among them, in all probability, George Washington and Thomas Jefferson.

In the 1930s Robert Johnson of Johnson & Johnson, makers of surgical dressings and baby powder, lived at Morven, where I often saw him coming and going in his long, black, chauffeured limousine. In time Morven would become the gov-

¹ Today you'll find only a hollow stump, tilted up, so that you have to kneel to find the bronze plaque.

ernor's mansion for the State of New Jersey.

I came to love Princeton: its towers and bells; its tweedy, leisurely pace; its mellowed charm; its ambience that was far more than plaques and monuments; my instant recognition, along Nassau Street or at Palmer Stadium, of someone whose name was well-known in print; and the sense of history at every turn.

But this took time.

The first boys I met were Jim Armstrong, who became president of Middlebury College in Vermont, and Bob Goheen, who became president of Princeton University. Dr. J. Ross Stevenson was then serving as president of the Seminary. His wife asked me to dinner at Springdale. Mrs. Stevenson did not invite my parents, explaining that she wanted me to get acquainted with two boys of my own age in the neighborhood.

Before our move to Princeton, father had insisted on buying me a pair of sturdy, high shoes to protect my ankles in freezing weather. (With hobnails they would have done well in a lumber camp.) When I arrived at Springdale, Jim Armstrong was sitting comfortably in the parlor, and the first thing I noticed—almost the *only* thing—was that he wore feather-weight, low, black, patent-leather dancing shoes. I sat gazing at his shoes in hopeless admiration, and at mine in shame and despair.

Bob Goheen came in full of bounce. Immediately Jim and Bob started chatting about the Blues and Whites. I hadn't the dimmest notion what Blues or Whites could be. As it turned out, they were rival teams at Country Day School, the private

school these boys attended. I tucked this vital information in my head, but could think of nothing to say about it. Soon Jim and Bob were comparing notes on ice hockey, a game I had never witnessed, much less played. Then their conversation turned to "bi-weeklies." Again I drew a blank. Politely, Jim explained that bi-weeklies were short exams given every other week to make sure young scholars at Country Day weren't lagging.

Seldom, if ever, have I felt more ill at ease in a social gathering. And I was guest of honor! Yet in a way I was flattered, too, that Mrs. Stevenson had invited me to Springdale. As time went on I was often there to welcome other people, not least an orphaned nephew of my age, Matt Stevenson, with whom I explored Springdale, that fascinating, Victorian whatnot, from top to bottom.

My brother Bill was born at the Princeton Hospital in 1930. For three years we lived at 60 Stockton Street while my eldest brother, Phil, entered Princeton University; Andy, Jr., starred in dramatics at Princeton High School; and I, having reached the "storm and stress" period of adolescence, finished junior high.

Elizabeth Gehman ranked first in our class. Her father, Dr. Henry Snyder Gehman—a man of many languages, vast erudition, and resonant, staccato speech—taught Hebrew and Old Testament at the Seminary. Yet Elizabeth became a scholar in her own right, bringing rare talents to the classroom. She was calm, assured, with a voice as fluid and steady, as melodic and soft, as her father's was explosively abrupt. Elizabeth always knew what page

we were on; she could invariably translate the passage or solve the problem at hand. If the teacher fished for an elusive fact, Elizabeth had it. One thing more. She always answered the question that had been asked—that, and not something else. At the end of twelfth grade, Elizabeth Gehman's academic record would stand out as the best any student had achieved in the history of New Jersey's public schools, a fact duly noted, without fanfare, by the principal.

"On the boundary" between friends in public and private schools, I found a high order of intelligence in either place, and enjoyed both. The two boys from Country Day, whom I'd met at Springdale, included me in their pick-up games. Jim Armstrong's father taught Greek at the Seminary; and Bob Goheen's mother had brought her children to the United States for their education, while their father stayed in India as a Presbyterian medical missionary. Bob and Jim, both budding Latin scholars, were as lively in their sports as they were diligent in their studies. They rallied Country Day boys for impromptu football, skating, or baseball, depending on the season, and let me join their fun. At the foot of the Graduate School hill, we skated on the pond until the ice had melted all the way around the edges. Jim and I kept on opposite sides of the floe; we didn't dare stop. Under our moving weight, the ice undulated like a magic carpet, and we could hear it crackling—time, or well past time, for each of us to lunge toward the bank. On such bright, winter days I usually went home with at least one sock sopping wet.

Jim, Bob, and I set up a refreshment stand on the seminary campus between Alexander Hall (which had potential customers) and the Armstrong home (which had a refrigerator). We gave up on lemonade and sold bottled drinks: cola, ginger ale, root beer, sarsaparilla, orange. Seminarians bought them; we drank the profits.

Bob, as it happened, could spare little time for this enterprise. So Jim and I paid him off in dimes and nickels, but mostly in pennies. Some years later that small-change deal fizzed in memory when Robert F. Goheen, as president of Princeton University, launched the first of his multi-million-dollar campaigns.

Our best customers at the stand were kids from the neighborhood, and with good reason. They were thirsty and gullible.

Jim developed a simple routine. He filled a paper cup part way with the drink on order, stopped pouring, and looked around warily.

Leaning forward, Jim whispered, "Would you like some dilution water?"

Pop-eyed, the youngster asked, "What's *that*?"

From under the stand Jim produced a strawbound Chianti bottle, emptied of its original vintage and filled with water from the kitchen tap.

Whatever "that" was, it looked tempting. Probably the youngster felt this beverage would not be worth mentioning when he got home. At any rate, he gladly paid more to get a mysterious elixir, half pop, half dilution water. For good measure, Jim dropped in an extra cube of ice.

We started a conservation program, which we thought might turn a profit, but it didn't go far. Jim and I found small pines in the wet lowlands between the Seminary and the Princeton Graduate School. I have since come to believe those pines had been set there to form a screen or windbreak, because there were so many of them, all the same size. At the moment, however, all we could see was a bountiful gift from nature. We dug up baby pines, potted them, and hawked them from door to door. Unhappily, few Princetonians shared our zeal for conservation, or, for that matter, beautifying the west end of town.

But one day we struck it rich. To the east of Alexander Hall, Jim and I discovered that a faculty residence, vacant the better part of a year, had a full bed of jonquils in bud and blossom. We also found stacks of red clay pots under the porch. We proceeded to set yellow jonquils in red pots, and these sold extremely well—so well, in fact, that we exhausted the whole supply of pots and flowers.

Mother asked where we'd gotten so many jonquils. I told her we'd found them growing in back of the unoccupied house. She was not at all sure we should have dug them up, but since the jonquils had already turned to cash, and part of the cash had been spent, she did not press the issue. It was by far the most lucrative business Jim and I had in partnership.

Dr. Harold Donnelly and his family moved into the empty house. Next spring Mrs. Donnelly invited the Blackwoods to dinner.

Halfway through the meal she

asked mother, with a perplexed look in her eyes, "Do you have moles in your garden?"

"No, why do you ask?"

"Well, last spring, before we moved here, I came and planted hundreds of jonquils in the backyard, and would you believe it? Not one of them came up! I wonder what happened."

I busied myself with roast duck and wild rice, a combination I'd not sampled before, and mother said in a quiet voice, "I wonder."

When we got home, mother and I doubled up laughing. And when it came time to divide our jonquils, she made sure that I did the work, and that I took a basket full of bulbs to Mrs. Donnelly.

Among other delights of growing up on campus was that of knowing seminary students, a varied lot, to be sure, but most of them friendly to the children of their professors. One such was Wilfred Steeves, a dark-haired, barrel-chested hulk who had an ear-to-ear grin and time for boys. When he worked on his Model A roadster, he let Jim and me change the plugs. He said to me after he'd set the timing, "Let's take her for a spin on the Brunswick Pike." I jotted in my diary for 21 April 1932, "Steeves took me 74 m.p.h. in his Ford. (I didn't know they'd go that fast.)"

Along with his Model A, Steeves owned a motorcycle, a Harley-Davidson twin, which he called "Leaping Lena." Beyond taking Jim and me for a ride now and then, Steeves had little use for Lena any more.

One spring day I asked, "Can we ride her?"

"Sure, do you know how?"

Of course we did.

Steeves had other things to do, took our word for it, and left.

Starting was a snap. Set the carburetor on "prime." Give her a couple of kicks. Right handle, gas, not too much. Left handle, spark, just so. Open carburetor setting one notch, turn ignition key, kick her again. I followed this procedure exactly. Lena gave a magnificent roar.

What next?

With Jim's help I got Lena off her stand. While he gave a push, I slipped into low and gave her the clutch. I rode around the grass plot behind Brown Hall, making several circuits before heeding Jim's repeated shouts to go for second gear. With silent misgivings and audible, metallic rasps, I made it into second.

A diagonal walk angled across the lawn. I steered Lena onto this concrete strip, and, wondering how fast a Harley would go in second gear, opened the throttle wide. Leaping Lena leapt. The answer to my question was that a Harley in second gear could go a lot faster than I wished to travel. If I went straight ahead, where steps descended to the Graduate School road, I'd take off and fly. If I swung left, I'd splinter a thick, menacing hedge. My only choice was to turn right.

In a moment I hit a rutted driveway crosswise.² Each rut jarred my throttle hand. The power, which I had turned down, surged once more.

Six stone steps on the west end of Brown Hall rose in front of me. I climbed them to the top. There Lena stalled.

² Driveway and hedgerow have since been removed.

Several grade school kids—fanciers of dilution water—stood watching. They saw me vanish around the corner of Brown Hall, and heard an awful clash of metal on stone followed by a more awful silence.

They came running.

While they held Lena steady, I climbed off. The Lilliputians, Jim, and I backed the motorcycle down the steps. We tried again. Every chance we had that spring, Jim and I rode Lena, taking turns, and keeping to the wide, green spaces of the south campus, which happened to be farthest from our homes.

Faculty homes had been built in more spacious times than the pinched years of the Great Depression. Ours on Stockton Street had servants' quarters, a butler's pantry, and other vestigial remains of a by-gone era. In the 1930s we had a maid, indeed, a series of maids, white and black, who thought a room plus a small salary and three meals a day made more sense than total unemployment. Yet even with hired help, mother found the massive home a strain on her heart. When an aging professor approached retirement, our family came in line for an older, smaller house on campus at 52 Mercer Street. It had ten rooms, six open fireplaces (two of them worked), two claw-footed bathtubs and one lavatory, and a lean-to shed on back. After we had moved to Mercer Street, a short block away, the Gehman family came and settled at 60 Stockton Street, their long-time residence.

Nevin Gehman, Elizabeth's younger brother, became one of my

closest chums. While Elizabeth Gehman was pitching into her grade-A homework, and, on the far side of the circle in the balancing red-brick house, young Don Mackenzie was doing the same, Nev and I met and surveyed *The Human Situation*, putting a disheveled world in order. "Scholarship," we had heard, rooted in the idea of "leisure," and in that broad sense we were scholars—peripatetics, walking and talking things over philosophically. Or sometimes just sitting. We could sit and do nothing, hours on end, discussing everything.

More than once we sat on the Gehmans' front porch steps, looking across at Thomas Mann's home. A tall hedge ran the length of the lot. Sometimes the Manns gathered with friends on the patio. Their feet showed through the lower parts of the hedge, but the higher, denser thicket hid their faces from us. To the best of my memory, I never saw the face of our distinguished neighbor, Thomas Mann, but we speculated on which pair of shoes belonged to him.

A still more distinguished neighbor who had also won the Nobel Prize, Albert Einstein, had already moved into a rented apartment at 2 Library Place. We could see the entry from our back porch and certain windows on Mercer Street, and I kept watch for any signs of movement.

I'll not forget the day a billow of white hair came floating toward our home, on what was reported to be Dr. Einstein's first walk to town after his coming to Princeton. In the next few years, I observed that his much-publicized head of hair was

cloud-like. From day to day it kept changing. Some days it billowed better than others. On this particular morning in 1933, however, it drifted along Mercer Street slowly, steadily, with no gusts of unscholarly haste, not so much a cumulus cloud as a spreading cirrus formation. Afterward Mr. Marsh told me that Dr. Einstein had made his first stop at 30 Nassau Street, next to what was then the Second Presbyterian Church, to make his first purchase in Princeton at Marsh's Drug Store. He bought a comb.

The Einsteins lived on Library Place a couple of years before buying a permanent residence close by at 112 Mercer Street. In an earlier issue of *The Princeton Seminary Bulletin*, I have written about "The Einsteins as Princeton Neighbors."³ They were friends of my parents, and each of four sons has anecdotes about them.

On 30 April 1935, for example, Dr. and Mrs. Einstein came to 52 Mercer Street for dinner. It happened to be my birthday.

Cousin Mildred had married William Houston, a physicist who then headed to Rice Institute in Houston, Texas. Some years earlier in Pasadena, California, when the Einsteins were visiting Robert A. Millikan at Cal Tech, the Houstons had met them. Bill, Mildred, and a few other kinfolk were with us when the Einsteins came to dinner.

To honor our guests, the men had decided to wear tuxedos.

As birthday boy, I greeted the Einsteins at the door. Entering the front room, Dr. Einstein, who had

³ New Series, Vol. III, No. 1.

on a neatly pressed business suit in contrast to his usual leather jacket and baggy pants, looked with raised eyebrows at the tuxedoed men.

"Ach," he exclaimed, "I did not know the occasion was so—so—ah—serious."

The evening was off to a laughing start.

While conversation winged around the room, Grandma Philips sat scowling at Dr. Einstein's feet. Everyone else talked. Grandma had nothing to say.

Table-talk at dinner was brisk and humorous. Time came for dessert. Mother had baked an angelfood cake for my birthday. She brought out an implement for dividing light, fluffy cakes, called a cake breaker. Its handle attached to a long stem, and the stem held a series of thin metal prongs about a quarter of an inch apart and five inches long. Dr. Einstein gazed at this long-pronged cake breaker in wide-eyed fascination.

"That," he chuckled, "is what I've been looking for." We all knew what had to come next. "It would do nicely to comb my hair."

We roared with laughter, Dr. Einstein perhaps most heartily of all.

After the Einsteins had left, grandma broke her silence. "I don't care if he *is* a genius, *he ought to wear socks to dinner!*"

Growing up on campus had its drawbacks, no doubt, but these were few and incidental. Dr. James I. Armstrong, from the perspective of a lifetime in education, writes: "I loved the spaces, the affirmative people, the latitude for discovery, games, companionship."

Exactly. The seminary campus of-

fered "the best of all possible worlds" in which to be a growing boy.

Princeton has changed, and the Seminary with it. Yet in the late presidency of Dr. J. Ross Stevenson and the early presidency of Dr. John A. Mackay, the campus fairly throbbed with the potency of coming things. Above all I remember, as young men, many who would find places of leadership in the Church, a generation that has now largely fulfilled its Christian calling:

—My boyhood hero, EUGENE CARSON BLAKE (whose photograph hung on the wall of Renwick's with Princeton's "Team of Destiny") walking toward Nassau Street with measured strides;

—GEORGE SWEAZY, muscular, tough, mentally lithe and swift, "pumping iron" in the old gym;

—CLEM BININGER, an All-American football player from Centre College, streaking down the old athletic field in a crimson sweat-suit;

—RAY LINDQUIST at our front door, looking so virile and handsome it made me wince;

—CHARLIE PRATT, packing us in the rumble seat of his convertible, and taking us to watch the sculls race on Carnegie Lake;

—SHERMAN SKINNER, whose wedding to Helen Loetscher I attended, and his genial brother, BOB, who was later vice president of the Seminary.

When, in time, my own call came to enter the ministry, I was happy to follow them, as they had followed Christ.

The Bible in Focus

by THOMAS W. GILLESPIE

This sermon was preached in Miller Chapel on October 16, 1985.

Text: *"I can do nothing on my own authority; as I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me. If I bear witness to myself, my testimony is not true; there is another who bears witness to me, and I know that the testimony which he bears to me is true. You sent to John, and he has borne witness to the truth. Not that the testimony which I receive is from humanity; but I say this that you may be saved. He was a burning and shining lamp, and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light. But the testimony which I have is greater than that of John; for the works which the Father has granted me to accomplish, these very works which I am doing, bear me witness that the Father has sent me. And the Father who sent me has himself borne witness to me. His voice you have never heard, his form you have never seen; and you do not have his word abiding in you, for you do not believe him whom he has sent. You search the scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness to me; yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life. I do not receive glory from humankind. But I know that you have not the love of God within you. I have come in my Father's name, and you do not receive me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive. How can you believe, who receive glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the only God? Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; it is Moses who accuses you, on whom you set your hope. If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote of me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?" (John 5:30-47).*

WHAT IS the Bible about? The answer depends upon how you read it. What you find in the Bible is determined by what you are looking for.

If you are looking for literature, you will find it in the Bible. The Bible presents us with a great variety of literary genres. There are stories and poems. The stories include tragedies and comedies. Among the poems may be found epic histories and cultic praise.

In addition there are prophecies and proverbs and parables. The New Testament is composed of a unique literary genre called the Gos-

pel and a common form of literature called the Letter.

But the Bible is not merely full of literature. The Bible *is* literature. If it is read in the church and taught in the seminaries as sacred scripture, it is read in the world and taught in the universities as great literature.

Professors of English offer courses on the Bible for the sake of acquainting their students with what is arguably the greatest and certainly the most influential literary work of world civilization.

Some of you, I know, have trouble with OTOT and NTOT. You are introduced not only to the literary con-

tent of the Bible but to the literary criticism of the Bible. You are exposed to theories about oral tradition, form criticism, and editorial redaction. And all of that is no doubt a part of the story of the Bible's composition.

Perhaps such studies turn you off to the Bible. The literary criticism of the Bible makes it seem like just another human book. Yet the humanness of the Bible need not turn us off to its message. For, as David A. J. Clines reminds us in a recent essay, "the distinction between the Bible as literature and the Bible as scripture is largely artificial." The truth of the matter is, Professor Clines contends, "the church can properly hear its Bible as Scripture only when it reads it as literature" (*Interpretation*, April 1980, p. 117).

If you are looking for history, you will find that in the Bible also.

Some of it is in the form of ancient saga, some of it in the form of simple chronicle, and much of it in the form of theological narrative—the story of God's actions in the world of time and space.

A great deal of the Old Testament is devoted to the history of Israel. From Genesis and Exodus through Samuel and Kings to Ezra and Nehemiah, you will find the history of the people who believed themselves to be the people of God.

Some would argue, and I think rightly, that the basic books in the library of the Old Testament are the history books. For it is within that history that the Psalms and the Prophets and the Wisdom Writings emerged, and it is within that history that we may best understand them.

The New Testament is equally

devoted to history. The four Gospels give us the only substantive historical evidence we have of the ministry and message of Jesus. Similarly, the primary sources of our knowledge of the history of the first-century Christian Church are the Acts of the Apostles and the Letters of the New Testament.

So if you are looking for history, you will find it in the Bible. Indeed, the heart of the Bible is its story, the story of people who believed that their story was actually God's story.

If you are looking for religion, you will find that in the Bible too. There is plenty of religion in the Bible, however you may define the term.

I make that qualification because the term "religion" means different things to different people. Recently, for example, I enjoyed conversation with two people at two dinner parties who made it a point to tell me that they were not very religious or no longer religious at all. What I took them to mean was that they are not presently into the sort of things that people who are religious are into, such as faith and worship and hymns and prayers.

Well, if that is what religion is, then the Bible is a handbook on the subject. You will find the creeds of Israel in the Old Testament and the creeds of Christianity in the New. You will find a great deal about how these people worshipped and how they prayed. You will even find many of the hymns they sang.

Moreover, you will find a gold mine of information in the Bible about the religion of people who did not share the religion of the Bible.

The Old Testament is replete

with references to the Nature worship of the Canaanites, a religion that centered upon sexuality and is for that reason so similar to the religion of many people today.

The New Testament tells us a great deal about the religions of the Hellenistic world, about the Oriental deities and the Greek gods, about the mystery cults and the Gnostic movements.

If it is religion that interests you, you will find it in the Bible.

And the list could be extended. If you are looking for morality, you will find plenty of moral instruction in the Bible from the Ten Commandments to the parandesis of Paul. If you are into sociology, you will discover plenty of sociological data in the Bible. If you are concerned about politics, you will find your subject in the Bible.

Is the Bible then about everything in general and nothing in particular?

Jesus says, No! In John's Gospel we hear him declare to his contemporaries:

"You search the scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness to me; yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life" (5:39-40).

The scriptures come into focus, in other words, when we read them as a witness to the Person of Christ. They are indeed literature. They do in fact record history. They do contain religion. But their focus is the reality of Jesus Christ.

That is manifestly true of the New Testament. But it is equally

true, according to Jesus, of the Old Testament. As one biblical scholar puts it, the New Testament tells us *who* Christ is and the Old Testament tells us *what* Christ is.

The Christ (in Hebrew, the Messiah) is God's anointed Son, the One chosen by God and promised by God and sent by God to give life to the world. And that One is Jesus.

So what is the Bible about? The answer still depends upon what you are looking for. But now let me suggest to you another possible angle of vision. If you are looking for *life*, you will find it in the Bible through Jesus Christ. For the Bible is a witness—make that, *the* witness—to God's gift of eternal life in the person of his only begotten Son.

Now rather than defend this claim abstractly and theoretically, let me illustrate it concretely and personally from the life experience of one of my former teachers.

When I was a student at Princeton Seminary, Dr. Emile Cailliet was our professor of Christian philosophy. Prior to that he had taught philosophy at the University of Pennsylvania. Yet he had not always been a Christian, and his own story of how he came to faith in Jesus Christ is worth sharing.

Emile Cailliet was born in a small village in France. His family was not in the least religious. He grew up learning and believing that Nature itself is the sum and substance of all reality. By the age of twenty-three he had never even seen a Bible, and he was firmly convinced that there was no God.

While serving as a soldier in the trenches of World War I, his natu-

ralistic philosophy was severely challenged by the carnage of combat. His best friend was killed by a bullet in the chest as they stood talking about the boy's mother. One night later a bullet shattered his own arm. After nine months in the hospital, he was discharged and resumed his graduate studies.

While still in the hospital, he had married a Scot-Irish girl whom he had met in Germany on Christmas Eve the year before the war began. She was a deeply Christian woman. But her husband announced to her that religion would be taboo in their home. "Little did I realize at the time," he recalls, "that a militant attitude often betrays an inner turmoil."

In returning to the books, he discovered that they were no longer the same books. Neither was his motivation for study the same motivation. "Reading in literature and philosophy," he said, "I found myself probing in depth for meaning. During long night watches in the fox-holes I had in a strange way been longing—I must say it, however queer it may sound—for a book that would understand me."

But he knew of no such book. So he decided to write one for himself. He began gathering passages from his reading that seemed to speak to his condition. He collected these in a leatherbound pocket book that he carried with him. He was sure that this collection of quotations would lead him from fear and anguish to release and jubilation.

One day he determined to put the finishing touch to "the book" that would speak to his condition. It was

a beautiful, sunny day. And he sat down under a tree and read his precious anthology.

The more he read, however, the more disappointed he became. Suddenly he realized that the whole undertaking would not work, simply because it was of his own making. It carried no strength of persuasion. In dejection he put the little book back in his pocket.

At that very moment, his wife—who knew nothing of the project he had undertaken—appeared at the gate of the garden, pushing the baby carriage.

She had been shopping in the town. The main boulevard had been so crowded that she had turned down a side-street where she found a Huguenot church. On impulse she had gone into the church, met the pastor, and asked him if he had a copy of the Bible in French.

Now she stood before her husband, Bible in hand. She was almost apologetic about what she had done. But Emile Cailliet was not interested in her apology. He was strangely drawn to the Bible which she handed to him.

He rushed to his study with it. What then happened I will let him tell in his own words:

I opened it and "chanced" upon the Beatitudes! I read, and read, and read, now aloud with an indescribable warmth surging within. . . . I could not find words to express my awe and wonder. And suddenly the realization dawned upon me: This *was* the Book that would understand me!

I continued to read deeply into

the night, mostly from the Gospels. And lo and behold, as I looked through them, the One who spoke and acted in them, became alive to me.

The providential circumstances amid which the Book had found me now made it clear that while it seems absurd to speak of a book understanding a man, this could be said of the Bible because its pages were animated by the Presence of the Living God and the Power of His mighty acts. To this God I prayed that night, and the God who answered was *the same God* of whom it was spoken in the Book (*Eternity*, July 1974, pp. 21-22).

Emile Cailliet was looking for life, for life worthy of the term "eternal," for life with deep meaning. His quest led him to read the Bible. And in the Bible he met the living Jesus

Christ. In Christ he found One who understood him, who spoke to his condition, and who satisfied his need.

Dr. Cailliet's story is uniquely his own. And yet it is not unique at all. For his is the experience of countless Christian men and women down through the centuries who have met Jesus the Christ through the Bible.

For the Bible is the witness to Christ. That is its focus. And Christ comes into focus for us when we look not *at* the Bible as literature or as history or as religion, but when we look *with* the Bible to the One of whom it speaks.

He is the living One, the risen Christ, who meets us with the love of God and gives us the gift of life.

You may know that you have read the Bible in focus when it leads you to pray, and when you discover that the God who answers is the same God of whom the Bible speaks.

God's Truth

by IAN PITT-WATSON

Dr. Ian Pitt-Watson is professor of preaching and practical theology at Fuller Theological Seminary. A native of Scotland, he served churches in Edinburgh and Glasgow, and was formerly head of the department of practical theology at the University of Aberdeen. Dr. Pitt-Watson was a regular broadcaster on British radio and television, and currently maintains an active schedule as preacher and teacher in the United States and Australia. This sermon was preached in Miller Chapel during the first week of the 44th annual Institute of Theology.

Text: *"You are a king, then?" said Pilate. Jesus answered, " 'King' is your word. My task is to bear witness to the truth. For this I was born; for this I came into the world, and all who are not deaf to truth listen to my voice." Pilate said, "What is truth?" (John 18:37-38).*

THERE'S a famous sentence written by the 16th-century philosopher Francis Bacon in *An Essay On Truth*. Commenting on the confrontation between Christ and Pilate recorded in John 18:33-38 Bacon writes, " 'What is truth?' said jesting Pilate, and would not stay for an answer." I think Bacon got it wrong. Pilate may have been a lot of things—world-weary, impatient, contemptuous, scared—but on this occasion he was in no mood for jokes. Probably he was just plain *confused*. He could not understand what the young Galilean was talking about. Pilate wanted to talk about treason: "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus wanted to talk about truth: " 'King' is your word . . . my task is to bear witness to the truth."

When Pilate responds "What is truth?" his question dramatizes not just the unforgettable moment of confrontation between a Roman governor and his Jewish prisoner,

but a confrontation of two great cultures. Pilate represents the culture of the Western world with its intellectual roots in Greece and its pragmatic roots in Rome. Jesus represents the culture of the People of the Book, a culture rooted wholly in the Book—in the Old Testament Scriptures. For Pilate, truth meant one thing, for Jesus it meant something quite different. We are children of a Western culture like Pilate, but we also claim to be the People of the Book. Sadly, when we speak of truth, not least in preaching, we often do so on Pilate's terms, not on Christ's.

For Pilate, whatever else truth was or was not it was something you *thought*. "All human beings are mortal, Socrates is a human being, therefore Socrates is mortal"—Aristotle had taught him that. "The interior angles of a triangle are together equal to two right angles"—Euclid had taught him that. "A body dis-

places its own weight of any liquid in which it floats"—Archimedes had taught him that. Truth for Pilate, as it still is for us, was a function of the intellect; it was a proposition, a concept, a calculation. For Jesus, and for the People of the Book, truth was a much bigger thing. He and they had not been brought up on Aristotle or Euclid or Archimedes but on the Law and the Prophets and the Psalms. And that meant that for them truth was not just something you *thought*, it was something you also felt and did. Supremely, it was something Christ *was*.

If we are to understand the truth of our biblical faith and faithfully preach it, we must also understand the truth about truth. Truth in the biblical sense of the word is not merely, or even primarily, a child of the intellect. The Bible does not separate the intellect from the emotions and the will in the way that Pilate did and that we still do. In the Bible, truth is a function not just of propositions but of persons—supremely of the person of God. He is the truth, and we who have heard his voice are "of the truth," have become (however imperfectly) a part of the truth. As we "grow in Christ" we "bear witness to the truth," not just by what we *say* but by what we *feel* and by what we *do*—for that is what we truly *are*. "To this end *we* were born"—and reborn—"to bear witness to the Truth," a truth that is not only thought, but felt and done.

Inevitably, as children of our Western culture, we think of truth (whether we know it or not) in terms of our Greek philosophical heritage. We think of ourselves, as the Greeks did, as being constructed on a tripar-

tite model. We have an intellect to think with, emotions to feel with, and a will to act with. But the *intellect* is meant to be king. It should control the emotions and instruct the will. Truth is regarded as a function of the intellect, and, in our Western way of thinking, finds its appropriate expression in propositions, concepts, and calculations. Our Western culture finds it difficult to understand any other kind of truth expressed in any other kind of way.

But truth in the biblical sense of the word *is* another kind of truth, and *does* express itself in another kind of way. It is not primarily expressed in propositions but in people—supremely in the person of God. The Hebrew word for truth is "emeth." The root meaning is "trustworthy," "faithful," "reliable." That personal meaning still survives in modern English usage where we talk, for instance, of "a true friend" or of people being "true to one another." That kind of truth is personal, not propositional. I *feel* you are my friend, and do not merely think so. And, if I am true to someone, that is not primarily a description of what I think but of what I feel and *do*. "Emeth" truth is like that. It is descriptive of persons rather than propositions and it is not only thought but felt and done.

The New Testament word for truth is the Greek word "aletheia," and precisely because it *is* a Greek word it carries with it overtones of Greek classical usage in which truth is seen as a child of the intellect and a function of proposition. But the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament (which was the regular "pew Bible" in New Testa-

ment times) had translated the Hebrew "emeth" into the Greek "aletheia." So throughout the New Testament we find a subtle blend of Hebraic and Greek thought forms. Nevertheless the Old Testament "emeth" meaning is seldom wholly muted. That is why John's Gospel can quite naturally talk about "doing the truth" (John 3:21) and about "Jesus being the truth" (John 14:6).

All this is more than a matter of academic interest. It goes to the heart of our understanding of the nature of the biblical truth we are commissioned to preach. Too easily we have allowed ourselves to be locked into the assumptions of our own Western culture and have been content to preach Pilate's truth alone, the child of the intellect that expresses itself in propositions. We have tended to accept without question the tripartite division of human nature into intellect, emotion, and will. To do so is profoundly unbiblical. Neither the Old Testament nor the New recognizes any such division.

In biblical usage "the heart" (O.T. "leb," N.T. "kardia") is not simply the seat of emotions. When the Bible wants to refer to that, it very accurately speaks of the "guts" (O.T. "meim," N.T. "splagchna," KJV "bowels"). I do not simply feel with my heart, I think with it as well. Indeed, "leb" and "kardia" are frequently translated as "mind" rather than "heart." The words do double duty according to context. In the same way the other Hebrew words translated mind in the Old Testament ("nephesh," "ruach") are feeling words as well as thinking words, and the New Testament counterpart ("dianoia" and "nous") frequently

carry overtones of that Old Testament usage. The hard line we draw between thinking and feeling, head and heart, is simply not there in the Bible.

So what about the will? Significantly, Hebrew has no separate word for it! I do not only think and feel with my heart, I will with it as well. In other words, the Bible knows nothing of that tripartite division of human nature into intellect, emotion, and will, and has little interest in a truth that is a child of the intellect alone. It speaks of a different kind of truth that is not just thought but felt and done.

Many of our Western theological and preaching traditions (including my own Scots Presbyterian tradition) have been partial in their witness to biblical truth because they have presented it in purely conceptual propositional terms. The assumption has been that if people can be made to *think* the right things then *feeling* and *doing* the right things will naturally follow. Sadly, it does not. I am proud of my own tradition, of its commitment to rigorous intellectual discipline, and of its deep concern for sound doctrine. I know that if we think the wrong thing about God it will not be long before we start feeling and doing the wrong thing as well. Propositional truth matters. Propositional truth about God matters supremely. But sound doctrine and propositional truth are not enough, if the heart is unmoved and the will remains irresolute. Felt truths are not to be despised. Some people feel the truth of their faith with a profundity that makes mere intellectual assent to the creeds and confessions look almost superficial

by comparison. "Everyone who loves knows God" (I John 4:7) no matter how inept such lovers may sometimes be at expressing their love in propositional orthodoxy. "The unloving know nothing of God" (I John 4:8) no matter how immaculate their intellectual orthodoxy may be. In the same way, some people "do the truth" of their faith (John 3:21) in a way that shames both our intellectual orthodoxies and our felt traditional pietisms. "Not everyone who calls me 'Lord, Lord' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only those who do the will of my Father" (Matt. 7:21). *The truth we preach must be a truth not just thought, but felt and done.*

Other traditions in the church have reacted sharply in their preaching and worship against the kind of intellectualism or quasi-intellectualism I have been describing. They have rediscovered and celebrated the importance of felt truth. They have recognized that what we feel (not least about God and one another) is sometimes more important than what we think, for what we think is sometimes no more than a rationalization of what we already feel. But that healthy reaction against an excessive concern for propositional precision has sometimes led to theological irresponsibility and to self-indulgent emotionalism in preaching as in worship. Felt truths are not to be despised, but felt truth is not enough, unless it is reinforced by rigorous thinking and validated in Christian action. Our faith is not even a halfhearted faith if we only feel with our hearts, and do not *think* and *act* with them as well. *The truth*

we preach must be a truth not just felt, but thought and done.

Yet other preaching traditions, impatient with both propositional theology and emotional pietism, go straight for the truth done. Doing the truth becomes the heart of the gospel. Doctrine is muted and emotion is sometimes suspect. Personal lifestyle or social action or both become the principle instruments of Christian witness. There is great power in that witness and much to be learned from those who make it central. "You will recognize them by the fruits they bear" (Matt. 7:16). But "truth done" that is not part of a truth thought and felt can easily degenerate into a burdensome "works righteousness" and a new legalism. "What we ought to do" is only made possible by what God has done. Our response to God in love and gratitude for what he has done *enables* us to do what we ought to do, and that response is not merely ethical but intellectual and emotional. The truth done is the fruit of the Christian faith. But the truth done is not enough unless it is reinforced by sound doctrine and empowered by authentic feeling. *The truth we preach must be a truth not just done, but thought and felt.*

The special kind of truth of which the Bible speaks is a holistic truth in which intellectual assent, emotional involvement, and volitional commitment are fused together when we *wholeheartedly* embrace the Christian faith. The faith we profess, the gospel we preach, is designed by God to soar on the thrust of these three engines, intellect, emotion, and will. All three are needed. A three

engine jet plane can indeed fly on two engines, but it does not do so very well. It can even keep airborne on one engine but that is always dangerous. Some of our preaching tries to fly on one engine—sometimes the intellect, sometimes the emotions, sometimes the will, the choice depending on our tradition or our temperament. More often we fly on two engines. Twin engine preaching is usually safe, but seldom soars. Much preaching in my own Calvinist tradition is twin engine preaching. It flies on the intellect and the will. It is concerned that people think the right thing and do the right thing, and consequently it has tried to be doctrinally responsible and ethically concerned. But often such preaching can be emotionally uninvolved, and that leaves it less than wholehearted and, therefore, less than biblical. Each of us must make our own personal self-assessment. We must identify the engine which for us is the weakest in its thrust, and regularly service that engine with special care.

I have described biblical truth as a truth not only thought but felt and done. That is so. But in so describing it I have had to fall back on our Western way of thinking of human nature in terms of intellect, emotion, and will. As we have seen, that is an unbiblical way of thinking. To think biblically we must discard that tripartite model and learn to think passionately and to feel thoughtfully, for only so can we act wholeheartedly. In our preaching as in our living, we have got to get together the truth that we think, the truth that we feel, and the truth that we do. There are ways in which we can fa-

cilitate that integration and fusion of thinking, feeling, and doing that biblical truth demands. But, in the end of the day, that fusion does not happen as a consequence of anything that *we* do. It is a gift of grace. In the Bible, grace and truth are natural allies and it is grace that enables us to get together truth thought with truth felt and truth done. At the time of a sermon's delivery, as at the time of its conception, there can come a miraculous moment when what we are thinking and feeling and saying are no longer three things but one. Then we know that we are near the Truth, and in that moment we experience grace. I wish I could be more precise, but I speak of a Truth that is the Word beyond words.

Nevertheless, although I cannot express in clear concepts what I have just been trying to say, I can tell you what it is like. It is not inappropriate that this sermon should end not with a concept but with a simile, not with a proposition but with a picture, not with a summary but with a story.

When I was a boy of about fourteen I came reluctantly to the conclusion that I should have to learn to dance. I didn't much like the idea, but I could see that my friends who were good dancers were enjoying certain social fringe benefits that I was missing. I decided that before making a public exhibition of my awkwardness I would master the art secretly and in private. I bought myself a book called "Teach Yourself to Dance." It contained detailed instructions and elaborate diagrams showing exactly what to do and where to put your feet. (I'm talking of ballroom dancing 1930s style, not

of today's discos!) I mastered these instructions and memorized the diagrams—I really knew the book. Intellectually I had mastered the subject matter. I also spent many hours trying to put what I knew into practice. I did so alone in my bedroom, using a pillow for a partner and studying my progress in the wardrobe mirror.

What I saw in the mirror was not reassuring! I was putting my feet in all the right places for I knew the book, and I was doing what the book said. But something clearly was missing. I was thinking the right things and doing the right things, but I couldn't get the *feel* of it, and in consequence everything I did seemed clumsy—graceless.

Then one night at a party a nice girl who knew of my difficulty said, "Come on, try it with me." So I did, and to begin with I felt even more of a fool because I was so awkward and she was so full of grace. Then something strange happened. A little of her grace seemed to pass to me and I began to get the *feel* of it. For the first time all I had learned in the book began to make sense, and even the painful practice in front of the mirror began to pay off. What had been contrived now became natural, what had been difficult now became easy, what had been a burden now became a joy—because at last I had got together what I was thinking and what I was feeling and what I was doing. In that moment I experienced a kind of grace, and it was very beautiful.

We profess and preach another and much greater kind of grace. It comes to us when we get together

truth thought, truth felt, and truth done. We've got to know the Book, that comes first. And we've got to do what the book says, follow in Christ's steps. But we can *know* truth and even *do* it and still be awkward, inadequate, *graceless*, until we get the *feel* of it. That is when we need to remember that it is not meant to be a solo dance. (Preachers do so love to be soloists.) Christ wants us to try it with him. To begin with, we often feel more inadequate than ever when we do that because we are so clumsy and he is so full of grace. Then it happens, in our preaching as in our Christian living. We share in his grace. All the Book says comes alive, and, when we preach it, what used to be contrived now becomes natural, what used to be a labor now becomes spontaneous, what used to be a burden now becomes a blessing, what used to be law now becomes gospel. Why? Because we are learning the meaning of grace; because now God's Truth, thought, felt, and done, is embracing us in the dance—the Truth that stood before Pilate but that Pilate never recognized, because Pilate thought truth was a proposition not a person, a diagram not a dancer.

You may know the song by Sydney Carter about Christ, "The Lord of the Dance." The original goes back some four hundred years to a carol called "My Dancing Day." (The early carols were all music for dancing.) The words of both the old and the new versions tell the whole story of Christ's birth, life, death, and resurrection. The old carol tells it in great detail and in many verses. Christ is the singer, and after each

verse he repeats a tender refrain to us, his beloved:

Sing, O my love, my love, my
love,
This have I done for my true
love.

The modern refrain is more robust but no less appropriate:

"Dance then, wherever you may
be,

I am the Lord of the Dance,"

said he,

"And I'll lead you all wherever
you may be,
I'll lead you all in the dance,"
said he.

"And we beheld his glory, full of
grace and truth" (John 1:14).

The grace of our Lord Jesus
Christ be with you all.

Seward Hiltner

1909-1984

OUR COLLEAGUE and associate, Seward Hiltner, died at his home on Ross Stevenson Circle, November 19, 1984. In his passing from our midst, we express in this formal but collegial setting our sense of irreplaceable loss. His was a Princeton Seminary name of worldwide distinction, a recognized pioneer in his field, a creative mind wherever he gathered with others, and a congenial, if sometimes critical, colleague.

As we record our sorrow on this occasion, at the same time we rejoice in his extraordinary career. He readily shared with us his many and diverse talents, making us colleagues with him and with each other, and magnifying all of us in our common theological enterprise.

Seward Hiltner was born in Tyrone, Pennsylvania, near the spine of the Allegheny Mountains. He was a graduate of Lafayette College (1931) and received his doctorate from the University of Chicago in 1952. From 1935 to 1938, he was executive secretary of the Council for the Clinical Training of Theological Students. Between 1938 and 1950, he was executive secretary of the Department of Pastoral Services, the Commission on Religion and Health, and the Commission on Ministry in Institutions, all of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America. In 1950, he joined the faculty of the Divinity School, University of Chicago, as associate and then as professor of pastoral theology. From 1961 to 1980, he was professor of theology and personality at Princeton Theological Seminary.

Among the many consultancies which he held, in addition to his seminary responsibilities, the most notable was his service with the Department of Education at the Menninger Foundation where he also served as visiting professor in 1957. A wider circle of influence was felt by many through his twelve books and the more than five hundred articles published in magazines and journals of all kinds.

From the beginning of his career, Seward Hiltner was a leader of the budding pastoral care movement, exercised first through his position as executive secretary of the then relatively new Council of Clinical Training. Helen Flanders Dunbar, now celebrated as one of the dynamic pioneers of psychosomatic medicine, was head of the Council, and it was she who first saw in the young Hiltner great potential for pastoral care leadership. In these early years, he founded or co-founded more than one notable clinical training program for ministers and, more significantly, began to define a position within the movement that had great and continuing consequences.

Although appreciative of the contributions of psychiatry and psychology, Hiltner saw that to make a permanent contribution, the clinical training movement should align itself with theology as a discipline and with the theological seminaries. This was not a position that was widespread in the movement, and several other leaders, including Dunbar, resisted it.

Hiltner understood his own position as an extension of the views of Anton

Boisen, under whose supervision he had taken clinical training in the early 1930s. Boisen had stressed clinical pastoral training as a method of learning theology from "living human documents," rather than only from books. Hiltner, while making many contributions to the development of pastoral care as a form of ministry to troubled persons, always regarded the enterprise from a primarily theological viewpoint.

In 1949, Seward Hiltner published his *Pastoral Counseling*, a textbook for those who needed to begin at the beginning, but with enough basic theory and wide-ranging penetrating observations that it is still in print thirty-five years later. This book reflected Hiltner's work in the wartime effort to train large numbers of clergy in the art of counseling, especially as part of the rehabilitation of military personnel at the close of World War II, an effort that drew heavily on Carl R. Rogers. Although the book showed affinities with Rogers' so-called "non-directive" approach, Hiltner was careful to distinguish his theological position from Rogers.

The centerpiece of Hiltner's specifically theological contribution was undoubtedly his *Preface to Pastoral Theology* (1958), the first systematic attempt in modern times to describe the relationship between the traditional "classical" disciplines in theology and the "practical" disciplines as theological in character, so as to understand pastoral theology as undergirding pastoral care. To accomplish this, he employed a perspectival model in which every aspect of ministry is regarded as at least potential in every act of ministry, actual or contemplated. He insisted that reflection on such acts of ministry with a theological question in mind would yield contributions to theology proper in its several branches.

As we all know, Seward Hiltner made several important contributions to the structure of the curriculum at Princeton Seminary, some of which have influenced theological education elsewhere. Perhaps his most enduring influence at Princeton can be seen in the Ph.D. program, in which he insisted on preliminary proposals and extensive across-the-board research, with candidates for higher degrees subject to continuing supervision and evaluation. He also served as chief architect of the D.Min. program.

During his lifetime, Seward Hiltner was honored for many achievements, including an honorary doctorate from his alma mater, Lafayette College, in 1951, the annual award from the Academy of Religion and Mental Health in 1966, and a special award from the Delaware Association for Clinical Pastoral Education in 1980. But for those who knew him for any period of time, it was his impact as a person that is best remembered. To say that he was a complex person is to state a truism that can be applied to many if one knows enough about them. But to say that Hiltner's complexity was more manifest to many than is the case with most is to come closer to the truth.

Perhaps his greatest gift was an intuitive ability to grasp the essentials of a problem or issue confronting some group of which he was a part. He could state the essence in such a way that those present would say to themselves and to one another, "That's it."

Seward Hiltner was exacting of himself and others, and when either

failed to measure up to high standards, his temper could flare along with the bluntness of communication which did not always achieve the result he desired. His extended memos to colleagues about matters in which he perceived their performance to be less than adequate are a part of "Hiltneriana" at Princeton.

On other, and increasingly rare, occasions, Seward Hiltner displayed a light and playful side of his personality. He could make people laugh with doggerel verse, and his considerable charm may well have reflected his early training as a Fuller Brush salesman. In his later years, personal tragedy left a deep scar and sadly reduced these traits to a point where they were only occasionally glimpsed.

If to some Seward Hiltner seemed aloof or autocratic, it was partly because he demanded of everyone the high standards he set for himself. A tireless, even compulsive, worker, he drove others as he drove himself and refused to settle for mediocrity or bargain with sham.

But for many others, including some of our own faculty who would readily testify, Seward Hiltner was a warm, caring, and radically sympathetic person. He had a scholar's intellectual rigor but a pastor's acceptive awareness of human nature. In time of pain, suffering, or crisis, many knew at first-hand what it meant to them to have Seward Hiltner on their side and to know by his presence that someone was quietly standing by.

There is much more to say about Seward Hiltner as a person and regarding his multiform contributions to theological education. He advanced our common cause by going the second scholarly mile, and we—the seminary, the faculty, and the Church ecumenical—are the benefactors of his astonishingly rich legacy.

To his wife Helen and their daughter Anne, and to his brother Robert P. Hiltner, we extend our sympathy and affection.

Eugene Carson Blake

1906-1985

“**W**E COME—late we come—but we come to present ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a living sacrifice . . . in a kind of tangible and visible sacrament. . . .” So spoke the Reverend Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC, August 28, 1963, at the invitation of black Christian leaders on the occasion of the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. Only as a rhetorical device could he have claimed he came with those white clergy who were late in bringing their support for racial justice. In this as in all the social causes where he so deeply felt called to serve Christ and His Church, Gene Blake was never late in his life.

The shape of the Christian Church worldwide intrigued him early. After graduation from Princeton University with honors in philosophy, he taught philosophy and religion for two years at Forman Christian College, Lahore, India. He was graduated from Princeton Theological Seminary in 1932. In his first pastorates—in New York City, five years at the First Presbyterian Church, Albany, New York, and eleven years as pastor of the strategic Pasadena Presbyterian Church—he developed his skills as spokesman and interpreter of the social implications of the Christian Gospel in the twentieth century and the coming shape of denominationalism. In 1951 Dr. Blake campaigned for and was elected to the only office in our Church which could be reinterpreted as an executive office, Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

It is surely of the essence of leadership “whether a man is burdened by authority or enjoys it; whether he is trapped by responsibility or is made free by it; whether he is moved by other people and outer forces or moves them.” Just as surely what separates the major leader from the minor or merely adequate leader is his or her ability to see beyond limits, the boundaries, and the routine requirements of an office and imaginatively to perceive new roles, wider dimensions, expanded expressions of his initiative in the exercise of that office. Elected to three successive terms, fifteen years in all, Eugene Carson Blake was to interpret and serve the Office of Stated Clerk with a vigor, a daring, and a style that would change the weather of the Protestant Church in its message and witness to America and the world.

As he led the Presbyterian Church in eloquent protest and timely action against the threats of McCarthyism, racism, and our tragic involvement in the Viet Nam War, his passion was to point us all in the direction of a Church that “must become more fully one, holy, catholic, and apostolic because it is already one in its Pioneering Lord.” From a distance of a quarter of a century later we look back and wonder, which of his prophetic stances took more courage and wisdom at that time? Was it his leadership of the opposition to President Harry S. Truman’s proposed and eventually withdrawn plan to appoint an ambassador to the Vatican, or his leadership of a ten-day

trip of American church leaders to visit the Soviet Union as guests of the Russian Church at a time when the paranoia of McCarthyism was at crest? For which appearance did he pay a heavier personal price? For that Sunday in 1960, when from the pulpit of the Grace Episcopal Cathedral in San Francisco his sermon proposed that we join the Episcopal Church in inviting the Methodist Church and the United Church of Christ to form with us one denomination? Or was it for that day in 1963 when he led a march protesting segregation in an amusement park in Baltimore, and he became the first establishment Protestant Executive to be arrested for participating in such a demonstration? When a critic carped at his arrest over so trivial a cause as an amusement park, his comment was, "I suspect that Jesus cares as much about colored children who can't ride roller coasters as He does about those who are cheated in their education." Over which cause did he lose more sleep? Over his leadership, at President Johnson's request, in helping to develop the interfaith lobby which worked to secure passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act—of which the outspoken opponent, Richard B. Russell of Georgia, said in blunt summary, "The preachers did us in!"? Or was it more of an effort to sustain his protest against American foreign policy and to remain so outspoken a critic that he was declared "unacceptable to the White House as a religious representative" during the last years of the Johnson administration?

In his biography of Dr. Blake, Douglas Breckenridge concludes: "Few people have been able to work so effectively within the system as Blake and simultaneously function as such an effective critic of the status quo." He freely admitted he was an organization man with "more faith in cumbersome Church procedure than in independent freelance activities." He called himself an "ex-fundamentalist who became neo-orthodox." Those who found him such a formidable adversary would have been amazed at his modesty and sensitivity. His theological strength was traditional. His loyalties were unapologetically institutional. His pride in and love for Princeton Theological Seminary were lyrical. He served the seminary as trustee from 1954 throughout his life. We who were privileged to know and work with him and to come to love and admire him as well join the many who thank the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ for sending us in our time of critical need such a leader and such a friend as Eugene Carson Blake. To use his own words, we cherish his memory "as a kind of tangible and visible sacrament . . . which alone in times like these can manifest to a troubled world the grace available at communion table or high altar."

Review Article: Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life¹

by GIBSON WINTER

A native of New York and an ordained priest of the Episcopal Church, the Reverend Gibson Winter is Maxwell M. Upson Professor of Christianity and Society Emeritus at Princeton Theological Seminary. An alumnus of Harvard (A.B.), Cambridge Episcopal Theological School (B.D.), and Harvard University (Ph.D.), Dr. Winter has taught at the Divinity School of the University of Chicago, and is the author of numerous books, including Liberating Creation (1982).

READING this volume is similar to reading Karen Horney's book, *The Neurotic Personality of Our Time*—one discovers halfway through that one is reading about one's self. The authors have fashioned a critical interpretation of the American ethos from various interviews. Following clues from Alexis De Tocqueville's insightful study, *Democracy in America*, they have explored the fate of the individualistic pattern of life which he had observed in the nineteenth century. The phrase, "habits of the heart," comes from De Tocqueville and refers to the "consciousness, culture, and practices of life" of a people (meaning here North Americans of the United States). The authors are frank to admit that this is a study of middle-class Americans. Although they acknowledge that this is only one segment of American life, they consider it a significant class in shaping the American way of life.

The study explores the effects of radical individualism on private and public life. The basic question informing the study is "how to pre-

serve or create a morally coherent life" under the conditions of radical individualism. If the aim of life is to find personal fulfillment and achieve a kind of autonomy for oneself, it is difficult to maintain personal relationships much less a responsible public life. The study addresses this question in rich detail through case studies, introducing critical interpretations at appropriate points to indicate both the strengths and weaknesses of this individualistic tradition. The volume is organized according to this individualistic pattern, as the authors interpret it: starting with the atomic nucleus of American life, the individual agent, they trace the relationships of the individual to family members, therapeutic helpers, community members, public obligations, religious fellowships, and national identity. Although the authors are concerned about the recovery of the Republican and Biblical traditions for the rebuilding of public responsibility, these traditions are overshadowed by the search for individual autonomy.

Many of the individualistic trends which appear in our time were present or incipient in earlier periods of American history. However, focus

¹ Bellah, Robert N., Richard Madsen, William M. Sullivan, Ann Swidler, and Steven M. Tipton. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1985. Pp. 355. \$16.95.

on the individual has intensified along with a sense of isolation and an erosion of citizenship. The search for the self has followed two paths: utilitarian individualism in the life of work—a pursuit of interests and advantage; expressive individualism in personal, familial, and communal connections—centering largely in cultivation of personal life styles. The common denominator between the types is the search for autonomy. It seems to eventuate in loneliness and broken relationships more often than in self-fulfillment which is its ultimate goal. As the writers observe, such a developmental pattern probably requires more generational continuity and historical as well as religious structure in order to fulfill its aim. However, the drive to autonomy inclines the individual to break away from those very bonds that might be supportive of the fulfillment that is sought.

Marriage and family life provide important supports for this personal search, even as they suffer the eroding impact of such an individualistic orientation. An instability of marital bonds is now common in American life. However, recognition of the dynamics of this individualistic style leads one to wonder that marriages endure as well as they do. This suggests that much more is going on in American life than the search for autonomy, as the writers observe; nonetheless, such communities as can be established are under constant pressure from the fragmentation that individualism generates.

In reaching beyond the nucleus and the family, the authors uncover one of the most interesting aspects of the personal search—the promi-

nence of the therapeutic culture as model of personal relationships. The importance of the therapeutic in this study indicates the fully middle- or upper middle-class character of the inquiry. This is already common knowledge from the popularity of books on personal therapeutic, but the authors help us to understand how this strategy now plays into the managing of corporate and bureaucratic relationships. This instrumental function of the therapeutic fits well within the pattern of utilitarian individualism, where coping within large, impersonal structures is the essence of survival as well as upward mobility. On the expressive side, the therapeutic creates a radical pluralism of values that fits well with the liberal heritage from Hobbes and Locke to the present time—a heritage in which desires and values are non-rational and idiosyncratic. In this sense, the therapeutic is the fulfillment of a long-standing trend toward the instrumental handling of our world. Everything becomes a means to personal satisfaction, including other persons and even religious affiliation.

This somewhat naked picture of an individualistic tradition is, of course, offset by the existence of communities of memory and tradition which limit its impact. This is well expressed in the text as follows:

And if the language of the self-reliant individual is the first language of American moral life, the languages of tradition and commitment in communities of memory are "second languages" that most Americans know as well, and which they use when the lan-

guage of the radically separate self does not seem adequate (p. 154).

As the authors turn to involvements of individuals in public life, they explore the local communities in which their subjects are engaged. Many of these commitments are to a vision of the small town, now embodied in the suburban community. Even the professional activists who seek to build community seem to be guided by images of extended kinship or a congeries of conflicting interest groups. In general, their study documents a truncated kind of citizenship among middle-class Americans. Politics seems to connote something unsavory, and, whether warranted or not, this stance isolates many individuals from serious political involvement. The other side of this coin is that the complexity and interdependence of our large-scale society remain a mystery to those who live with an individualistic understanding of society. As the authors put it, "... the structural factors that affect individual outcomes remain opaque to him." The net effect is to relegate the operation of the society to administrators and their professional aides.

Religious communities which might counterbalance this impoverishment of the public tend to operate within the realm of individual and private concerns—not so much by intention or desire of the leadership but simply as a reflection of the common life of American society. The self is the ultimate entity, as Thomas Luckmann pointed out many years ago in his volume, *The Invisible Religion*. This is not to deny the important contribution of the various reli-

gious bodies in lending personal support to individuals and communities. However, as a resource for the building of a common moral life, the churches are impoverished by the terms on which most of the membership makes its affiliation.

On the outer boundaries of individual affiliation is the symbol of a national society—a public realm in which some harmony might be achieved between the competitive struggle of the market and the solidarity of a common life. The authors trace three polarities in the envisionment of a public good, each pole of which has attempted to hold together the market and the common life: the economic establishment versus populism at the turn of the century; neocapitalism versus welfare liberalism in the period since the Great Depression; and, more recently, incipient proposals for a new direction in the administered society versus economic democracy. They observe, however, that the basic notions of individual fulfillment and economic progress or growth continue to inform these different visions. Whatever the direction of the next stage in the struggle, they see no way toward a public life without the cultivation of public virtue. Although they write with a seeming equanimity, as befits scholars, the authors see American society as in serious, moral, and spiritual crisis. They are really calling for a transformation of American culture and society toward what they call a moral ecology or a moral fabric of a common life. This is a radical call for "... a deep cultural, social, and even psychological transformation."

This volume is set forth as a set of

reflections on American life to be pondered and discussed. The writers hope to open a dialogue on the common or public life. They make no claim to have devised a set of answers to the difficult questions which they have raised; in fact, they explicitly avoid categorical proposals, although they are quite forthright in indicating their commitments and the direction of their hopes. In somewhat similar vein, there are several points on which the volume creates problems that cannot be resolved in the framework which the text presupposes. Several of these problems can be noted here for future discussion.

The text comes closest to being categorical in affirming individualism as our American destiny, whether in the form of radical individualism as our deepest identity as a people or religious individualism as the foundation stone of American religious life. Clearly the right of the individual is one of the precious gains of the last few centuries, where it is observed, but the authors have shown very clearly that the ontology of individuated entities—Western radical individualism—cannot lead to a public life. Individualism will have to be integrated within a more fully communal understanding of the person if it is to be salvaged from the trends to collective administration and conformity which De Tocqueville already anticipated. This is borne out by the deepening despair that runs through the text as it tries to move from the individual entity to a public life.

Another equally serious problem is the failure to deal as radically with the political economy as they do with moral questions. They are quite explicit in recognizing that the political economy is not working and identify proposals for a new direction. However, they do not acknowledge the crucial place of market capitalism in eroding the moral fabric and the importance of transformation in the political economy if there is to be any change in the texture of American public life. The failure of many socialist experiments has led social critics to shy away from criticism of the capitalist system in its corporate and state forms. Nevertheless, other options will have to be considered if there is to be a way beyond the increasing global dependency and national security states which seek to keep the dependent peoples in line. We do not have to have viable options to begin a serious critique of our present situation. Here the authors are inclined to accept the system, and like the therapeutic of which they are subtly critical, seek to adjust the individual to an inhuman world. This resignation emerges in their failure to set the American society in its global context and their proposal to cultivate public virtue without the structures to generate it.

These questions are raised in the spirit in which the text has been forged—a spirit of dialogue and seriousness about the future of a society that has so much promise yet threatens to miscarry and bring untold suffering, if not annihilation, in the process.

BOOK REVIEWS

Keck, Leander, and Furnish, Victor Paul. *The Pauline Letters*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984. Pp. 156. \$8.95 (paper).

As contributors to the Interpreting Biblical Texts series, Keck and Furnish are supposed to describe what is involved in relating the meaning of the Pauline letters in their historical setting to their meaning for us today. In meeting this objective, which they do admirably, Keck and Furnish have composed a book that is both invitingly readable and steadily informative, both to beginning and advanced students of Paul. What attracts the reader is an analysis of the Pauline corpus free of exegetical technicalities and abstract hermeneutical theory but at the same time full of insights based on careful exegesis and thoughtful interpretation.

How do the authors introduce the reader to the interpretation of the Pauline letters in such an engaging and illuminating way? By example. The reader sees each author at work in the Pauline corpus, attentively examining selected texts, coaxing out the meaning they had in their respective contexts, and suggesting their continuing significance for us. Even more instructive, at least for this reviewer, is the authors' placement of the reader among the interpreters who produced the Pauline letters. For, as Keck and Furnish demonstrate, Paul himself cited and interpreted Christian traditions as the need arose (1 Cor. 15), and the interpretation of what he wrote began in his lifetime (1 Cor. 5:9-13) and continued in the Deutero-Pauline letters, Acts, and even in the form, location, and order the letters have in the canon. Faced with this stream of interpretation within the Pauline corpus and the canon, the reader cannot help but realize the importance of determining the specific context of each letter and portion thereof and gain some notion of how the Pauline tradition might be utilized today.

As good as the book is, however, it does have a few minor flaws. The joint authorship of the book contributes to poor organization at several points. The reader is primed for a treatment of the early interpreters of Paul in a section with that title on pages fifty-five to

sixty-two, but the full examination of them comes only in the fifth and last chapter, some fifty pages later. This faulty arrangement clearly stems from the way the labor of writing the book was divided: Furnish wrote the end of the third chapter (pp. 55-62) and the fifth chapter, and Keck wrote the intervening fourth chapter.

A second shortcoming arises for the same reason. The authors open their book by delineating three views of Paul current in our society, so that readers can place themselves among the contemporary understandings of Paul. Keck confines his description of the first and third views, the public Paul and the church's Paul, to a few pages, but Furnish's treatment of the second view, the scholar's Paul, runs much longer, for in it he includes a characterization of the Pauline letters and an assessment of their authenticity. This may not be the best place for these considerations; chapter two, entitled "The Interpreter's Choices," provides a more appropriate context for such matters.

A third deficiency in the book may be its most serious. Despite the attention the authors give to placing the reader among the interpreters of Paul, they neglect to place themselves in that spectrum. That is, they fail to specify their position among contemporary Pauline scholars. Their general location is clear, since they subscribe fully to historical-critical methods, but the distinguishing mark of modern interpreters of Paul is what they identify as the center of Paul's theology. The authors state that this is an important determination for every interpreter to make, for every text must be read against Paul's overall thought (p. 47). But they do not let the reader know their position.

Do these shortcomings significantly mar the book? No, not even the last criticism lessens the positive impression the book makes. Perhaps it is more important, then, to ask whether there really is the need for *another* book about Paul. In light of what Keck and Furnish do, the answer is "yes." For despite the existence of several excellent introductions to Paul—Paul, by Guenther Bornkamm, and *The Letters of Paul, Conversations in Context*, by Calvin Roetzel, to name but two—Keck's and Furnish's approach to the

Pauline corpus may be the most inviting, and they do not neglect the Deutero-Pauline letters, which cannot be said of many others.

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Smalley, Stephen S. *1, 2, and 3 John*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 51. Waco, TX: Word Books, 1984. Pp. xxxiv + 386. \$19.95.

Stephen Smalley's commentary on 1, 2, and 3 John is the most recent volume to appear in the Word Biblical Commentary, a series edited and authored by a select group of evangelical scholars. The series has already produced several notable works, such as G. Hawthorne's commentary on Philippians and F. F. Bruce's on 1 and 2 Thessalonians (see the *Bulletin* vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 165-66). Smalley is a prominent evangelical Johannine scholar who has devoted much of his energies to the study of the Fourth Gospel. Now he has also contributed a solid and readable exposition of the Johannine epistles. His comments demonstrate a careful reading of the Greek text; his bibliographies are thorough and up to date. Nevertheless, the several shortcomings of the work tend to offset its merits.

1. In his general introduction, Smalley discusses a number of important historical and literary issues: the historical context(s) of the letters, their date and provenance, their relationship to the Gospel of John, etc. In Smalley's view, the Johannine epistles date from the last decade of the first century. They were probably all penned by the same author, in the order in which they now appear in the New Testament. The author was a member of the Christian church in Ephesus, where the Gospel of John had been published some ten years earlier by a group of believers who had themselves been influenced by the teachings of Jesus' "Beloved Disciple." The "letters" (1 John actually corresponds more closely to a position "paper") were written primarily to strengthen believers in their orthodox beliefs and practices, and secondarily to correct and refute members of the Johannine community who had carried some of the christological and ethical

teachings of the Fourth Gospel to inappropriate extremes (see below).

If not compelling, Smalley's views are at least provocative. But in view of the scholarly debates over these introductory issues one is dismayed by the sparsity of their treatment here. Smalley chose neither to summarize these debates nor to present evidence for his own positions. He instead asserts his views and leaves his readers to surmise their adequacy, on the basis, he suggests, of his verse-by-verse exposition. In point of fact, throughout the exposition itself the reader is constantly referred back to the introduction for substantiation of a critical point, only to find generalized position statements rather than evidence.

2. As already noted, Smalley takes great care in his exposition to deal with the details of the Greek text, making particularly helpful comments on the structure, syntax, and literary context of each passage. This marks the chief strength of the commentary. Nevertheless, one is struck by Smalley's seeming difficulty in coming to an exegetical decision when previous scholars have argued for differing interpretations of a text. At far too many points Smalley exasperates his readers by equivocating between exegetical options, saying that some scholars hold A, some hold B, and *both* are right. When John mentions the "word of life" (1 John 1:1), does he mean the incarnate Word, Jesus Christ, or the word about Christ, the Gospel? Both! When John calls Jesus the *hilasmos* for our sins (1 John 2:2), does he mean the propitiation of God's anger or God's expiation of sin? Both! When John uses the phrase "love of God" (1 John 2:5), does he intend an objective genitive (the human love of God), a subjective genitive (God's love of humans), or a qualitative genitive (God's kind of love)? All three! In most instances this kind of equivocation serves not to highlight the richness and depth of the text, but rather suggests the commentator's inability to decide what the author of the text was trying to say.

3. Smalley rightly attaches a great deal of importance to the historical context of these three epistles. But most scholars will agree that he has misconstrued this situation. Smalley contends that these letters were directed against two neatly categorized groups of opponents who threatened the community. On the left were those with too high a view of Christ (as totally God but not hu-

man) and too low a view of the law (as unimportant). With an acknowledged anachronism, Smalley labels this group Gnostic. On the right were those with too low a view of Christ (as totally human but not divine) and too high a view of the law (as a way of salvation). This group Smalley associates, even more anachronistically, with the Ebionites. Most scholars recognize the existence of the first group in the Johannine community; practically all of the direct polemic of 1 John is directed against just such persons who formerly belonged to the community but who later seceded from it (2:18-23; 3:4-10; 4:1-6; 5:1-11). But little trace can be found of a second group. Smalley, as is his wont, never demonstrates its existence. He instead lists several verses from the letters which, in his opinion, assume a relatively high view of christology (2:13-14, 20, 28-29; 3:2, 3, 5, 7; 5:20) and asserts that the author would not have stated such a position unless someone else in the community had sought to deny it (by means of a low christology). Smalley's methodological assumption is suspect in the extreme: an author's positive theological statements, regardless of their literary context and function, are understood to be polemical. On these grounds one could just as well argue that because 1 John states "God is love," another group in the community claimed that "God is hate." More likely the author of 1 John held certain christological concepts in common with the docetically-inclined secessionists (thus his own relatively high christology) and wrote his letter to combat some of their excesses (thus his direct polemic against a docetic view of Christ and too low a view of ethics).

4. Smalley is to be commended for providing a fresh and vibrant translation of the Johannine epistles for his commentary. Only occasionally, in the eyes of this reviewer, is the translation overly idiomatic or inconsistent (cf. from chapter 2, e.g., Smalley's translation of the demonstrative pronoun *ekēinos* as "Jesus" in v. 6; his awkward rendition of the neat parallelism of v. 16 as "sinful desire, a craving for what is seen, and pride for one's life style"; and his translation of *chrisma* as "consecration" in v. 27a but as "initiation" in v. 27b!).

By way of conclusion, it may be helpful to note that Smalley's commentary represents the second major exposition of the Johannine epistles to be published in as many years.

Raymond Brown's magisterial commentary appeared in *The Anchor Bible* in 1982, and there can be little doubt that this work will prove to be a standard reference tool for decades to come. While it may be true that comparisons are odious, they are nonetheless necessary—especially when students and pastors find numerous Biblical commentaries clamoring for their attention. Thus it is probably fair to say that in comparison with Brown's commentary, most readers will find Smalley's less thorough, lucid, and inspiring (though more expensive).

In short, aspects of Smalley's commentary commend themselves to students of the Greek New Testament—especially its numerous helpful insights into the syntactical and structural aspects of these epistles, based on a careful reading of the Greek text. But the drawbacks of the work suggest that it best be used only as a secondary source of reference.

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Brown, Raymond E. *The Churches the Apostles Left Behind*. New York/Ramsey, NJ: Paulist Press, 1984. Pp. 156. \$4.95 (paper).

For all those who have ever engaged in a conversation on what the New Testament says about the nature of the church, Raymond Brown's book, *The Churches the Apostles Left Behind*, will be greatly appreciated. It may serve as a primer for those who are trying to find a way to collate all the material in the direction of some judicious conclusions. It may also serve as a source of data, which could disturb those who are prematurely certain of their positions.

Brown's book examines what various Christian communities were being told by the authors of certain New Testament documents about surviving the passing of "the authoritative apostolic generation." "Survival" here has to do with how Christians in the sub-Apostolic era were faced with a crisis of self-identity. As the church evolved, and discovered itself apart from Judaism, how were various Christian communities encouraged to think about their own existence? Once those who knew Jesus died, what way of thinking about those who believed in him would best allow their groups to continue?

The method Brown employs is to approach a number of New Testament books looking for their distinctive answers to questions about the nature of the church in this period of crisis.

The distinctive understandings of the church espoused are represented by the Pastoral Epistles, Colossians/Ephesians, Luke/Acts, 1 Peter, the Johannine literature, and Matthew. (That these works represent the thoughts which at least guided some communities is adduced by their presence in the canon [p. 29].) One chapter reviews critical scholarship related to each of these New Testament ecclesiologies. The second part of each chapter is a "strengths and weaknesses" section which assays the particular contribution over against the greater, "more balanced" picture gleaned from all the New Testament literature.

The book, however, is not an attempt to consolidate a "New Testament ecclesiology." Quite the contrary is true. As in other penetrating texts by Brown (e.g., *The Virginal Conception & the Bodily Resurrection of Jesus* [1973] and *Jesus: God and Man* [1967]), a strong underlying purpose is to preserve the true character of the New Testament tradition. In this case, Brown chooses to protect the New Testament from unwarranted homogenization by those who are termed "ultraconservative" and who object to its diversity. The evidence which is collected makes untenable "a rigid theory of divine inspiration which discounts the human situation of the New Testament writings and insists that their message must be uniform" (p. 147). Brown's careful scholarship also challenges those who "project on the first century an ideal situation wherein Jesus had planned out the church, the apostles were of one mind in carrying out his directives, and the only ones who differed were the troublemakers condemned by the New Testament authors" (p. 147).

It is also true that none of the evidence in the New Testament documents indicates that any of these particular churches had broken fellowship with each other. These breaks occurred shortly thereafter and have continued without New Testament approbation. Yet, denominations today are quick to claim authoritative champions in one or another New Testament text. Brown's examination evolves into a challenge for the church today: How can we justify Christian

divisions without New Testament corroboration? It is true that diversity exists in the New Testament documents as they address questions about the character of the church. The Pauline corpus may emphasize a body free from the Law. James, on the other hand, may call for strict observance for his Judean audience. Matthew may conciliate by prescribing obedience to the Law only as interpreted by Jesus and mediated by the leaders of the church. And the Johannine community may understand itself foremost as a group of people guided by the paraclete. Brown contends that no single New Testament ecclesiology should be allowed to claim normative status. Consequently, it is not possible to legitimate divisions among churches today with biblical citations (p. 148).

The text is strongly ecumenical in that Brown describes how various denominations have chosen to emphasize different portions of the New Testament witness to legitimate their own situations and their subsequent separation from others. The adoption of a "canon within a canon" in various forms is close to the center of Brown's concern. The problem, one soon discovers, centers more upon how the New Testament is understood to be authoritative than upon the existence of illegitimate denominational boundaries. Christians have a "theological snackpack" for a holy book. To attempt to impose uniformity excludes certain texts and, perhaps, groups of people. The lesson churches must learn from this is that virtually every Christian community is neglecting part of the New Testament witness (p. 149).

The historical-critical character of Brown's study delivers his field from charges of being gratuitous. Originally delivered as the Sprunt Lectures at Union Theological Seminary (Richmond) in 1980, the study is directed toward practical-pastoral application (p. 7). For this reason, the text is brief and to the point. The footnotes are frequently editorial (almost apologetic). The work is designed to stimulate theological debate rather than resolve broadly-based historical problems. Consequently, the fact that the inquiry does not include either extra-biblical sources or references to other (perhaps) anti-heroes (e.g., Valentinus), for the study of early social history of Christian communities, is a purposed methodological limitation, not a methodological flaw. His purposes cause him to concentrate on what is presently ac-

knowledge as "authoritative" which also addressed the "question of survival" after the deaths of the "apostolic guides or heroes" (p. 30).

On the one hand, Brown's analysis is a great catalyst for discussion. Any text which carefully and precisely helps to establish reasonable parameters for doctrine and which may be given that formidable status "biblical" is to be applauded. On the other hand, there are methodological concerns which may distract the church historian. Was this survival after the deaths of the authoritative apostles a concern for these writers, or was the criterion of apostolicity something that arose in later controversies over what was to be considered authoritative? The Johannine literature seems to address the question. Luke/Acts, however, doesn't seem to respond to a theological crisis which ensued upon the deaths of Peter and Paul. Their deaths are never mentioned. It may be that only later, when called upon to defend a position, were these texts so interpreted and so made authoritative by their interpreters.

If indeed the crisis was real, felt, and addressed, there is still the problem of how to extrapolate accurate answers about today's crisis of authority and tradition from the New Testament responses. Certainly the nature and function of authority and tradition today is different from pre-canonical times. Brown's book does much to expose the difficulties inherent in such a hermeneutical project of applying what the text meant in its time to what it may mean for today.

If one attempts to use Brown's text as a sourcebook for early Christian social or doctrinal history, there will be disappointments. The scholarship is careful, but it is very compressed. Yet, the work is quite stimulating. It is a clear overview of certain major concerns of the New Testament communities. As such it provides an excellent resource for group discussions. What is most appealing, though, is the manner in which the facts are carefully separated from conformity and convention. The questions raised generate enough dissonance to engage anyone willing to seriously reflect upon the church's historical and constructive task of self-definition.

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Lovin, Robin W. *Christian Faith and Public Choices: The Social Ethics of Barth, Brunner, and Bonhoeffer*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984. Pp. viii + 183. \$10.95 (paper).

Can Christianity provide any sound, public basis for more action in this last quarter of the twentieth century? This is the problem Robin Lovin, associate professor of ethics and society at the University of Chicago Divinity School, puts before us, and he contends that the three giants of Protestant crisis theology, Karl Barth, Emil Brunner, and Dietrich Bonhoeffer, have provided clear and convincing answers to this question. The purpose of Lovin's book is both historical and constructive: it retrieves the strengths and weaknesses of Barth's, Brunner's, and Bonhoeffer's theological ethics in order to formulate the outlines of a contemporary Christian social ethic.

Lovin achieves this purpose remarkably well. He begins by setting forth the criteria by which a present-day social ethic should be evaluated. Such an ethic should intend to impose obligations on persons generally, involve generalizations about action, and invite general participation in public decision-making. Ethical inquiry, in short, seeks a mediation between general guidelines and particular situations. For Lovin, the essence of moral discourse is to give general ethical principles that are open to public scrutiny for guiding ethical action. The key words here are "general" and "public" because it is primarily by virtue of a Christian ethic's generalizability and publicness that it will be judged adequate or inadequate to the particular situation.

Next, Lovin considers his three theologians as a resource for a public Christian ethic. He notes five important similarities between Barth's, Brunner's, and Bonhoeffer's theological ethics: the commandment of God is the starting point of Christian ethics; the good is the will of God; refusal to unite Christianity and cultural values; and rejection of universal moral principles of the Kantian variety while utilizing, nevertheless, certain "general guidelines" for responsible action. These similarities, however, do not tempt the author into trying to forge a unified neoorthodox ethic based on Barth's, Brunner's, and Bonhoeffer's thought, even

though some of the secondary literature has attempted such a synthesis (e.g., Joseph Fletcher's *Situation Ethics*). Lovin, rather, exploits the critical differences between Barth, Brunner, and Bonhoeffer for his own constructive program.

What are the differences that separate each theologian, as well as their distinctive contributions? For Barth, Christian ethics is obedient response to the command of God. Lovin labels Barth's position *act-deontology* because it centers on the Christian's duty to obey a particular command of God in a specific situation. The command of God does not involve a universal rule to be followed or an eventual goal to be pursued, but a specific message for a particular situation. Outside of God's Word, there are no publicly warranted principles that can guide action. The advantage of this approach is that it rejects any assimilation of God's free Word into the rule- or goal-governed wisdom of the world; the disadvantage, according to Lovin, is that it can offer no real moral guidance for deciding on a proper course of action because it cannot account for ethical maxims that are public and generalizable. Such a position provides "more moral courage than moral guidance" (p. 24). This is the fatal Catch-22 of Barth's ethics: the only source of generalization in Barth's ethics, the Word of God, cannot be generalized from precisely because it is a free Word that creates new and surprising possibilities. So, as to Lovin's public criteria for ethics, Barth's project is doomed. "For all its theological integrity, Barth's position is impossible for a public ethic" (p. 42).

Not so for Brunner and Bonhoeffer, however. While Barth's "theological positivism," as Lovin calls it, regards the Word of God as the only source of truth for Christian moral reflection, Brunner's and Bonhoeffer's "theological realism" relates the particular message of the kerygma to the general features of "common human experience." Brunner and Bonhoeffer operate with two sources for ethical reflection, the particular message and generalizable experience, rather than with Barth's single source, the Word of God. This constitutes the central disagreement between "theological positivism" and "theological realism."

Brunner and Bonhoeffer are both realists, according to Lovin, but the content of their realism contains some critical differences. Brunner is an *act-teleologist*; the generality essential for a public ethics is provided in the

telos or goal of sustaining the "orders of creation" as discerned in the scriptural Word and common experience. Bonhoeffer, an *act-deontologist* like Barth, substitutes "divine mandates" as the tasks imposed on us by God for Brunner's somewhat static "orders of creation," but like Brunner, and unlike Barth, Bonhoeffer seeks to mediate the specific commands of the Word with the general spheres of obligation or "mandates" that shape our ethical responses. Moreover, Bonhoeffer's experimentation with the notion of a "venture of responsibility" in his cooperation with the conspiracy against Hitler indicates the publicness of his ethic—an ethic that appeals not to a privatized Word of God, but to the German people's general and well-founded antipathy toward Hitler. Bonhoeffer's and Brunner's "realist" ethics offers a perspective that is both Christian and public at the same time. "Brunner [and] Bonhoeffer's achievement is to show us . . . that theological realism can be compatible with public moral choice" (p. 16).

Obviously, Barth is the odd man out in this schema—"isolated but not insignificant" (p. 161), as Lovin put it. Yet Lovin also notes that in Barth's later works, the Swiss theologian argues that the command of God vis-à-vis the situation is understood by an appeal to the "prominent lines" of Jesus' teaching. Ethics, then, is not a private deduction of precepts from an otherworldly Word of God for Barth, but a hermeneutic of the publicly discussable "prominent lines" of the scriptural message that is not, in principle, closed to generalization. Still, Lovin agrees with Reinhold Niebuhr's criticism, for example, that Barth's refusal to condemn communism in the mid-1950s demonstrates the bankruptcy of Barth's ethics. I think Lovin is mistaken on this point. While Barth did oppose the Nazis, he chose not to oppose openly Cold War communism in order to be able to assist quietly the victims of Soviet repression. The debate is endless as to whether Barth made the right choice here, but is Barth's reticence to condemn loudly communism really an index to the failure of his ethics? Or is it not rather a clue to the fluid and contextual character of Barth's ethic, an ethic that can look to the "prominent lines" of Jesus' teaching in order to articulate public responses which are sometimes very loud (as in Nazi Germany) and sometimes quiet (as in the Hungarian crisis)?

Lovin's book is a well-argued engagement

with Barth, Brunner, and Bonhoeffer, that contains implications for Christian ethics today. Even beyond *crisis theology*, the book highlights a number of intellectual movements that have continuing impact on the present: Tillich's religious socialism, logical positivism, traditional Lutheran ethics, and Catholic moral theology. The major flaw of the book, in my opinion, is Lovin's argument that Barth's ethics is founded on a private "theological positivism" that remains "isolated" from the "theological realism" espoused by Brunner and Bonhoeffer, which Lovin endorses. This flaw, however, does not vitiate Lovin's successful attempt to develop an open and public social ethic, indebted to Barth, Brunner, and Bonhoeffer, that preserves the historic integrity of Christian witness.

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Hudson, Winthrop S., ed. *Walter Rauschenbusch: Selected Writings, Sources of American Spirituality*, Vol. I. New York: Paulist Press, 1984. Pp. 252. \$14.95.

The deep commitment to inward spirituality that nourished the social reform efforts of Walter Rauschenbusch (1861-1918), the foremost theologian of the social gospel, is beautifully captured in this book, edited by Winthrop S. Hudson. Hudson, the distinguished scholar often considered to be the dean of American church historians, presents writings which reveal the spiritual personality of Rauschenbusch and communicate his evangelical piety and passion for the kingdom of God. This fine collection constitutes the first volume in a series entitled *Sources of American Spirituality*, published by Paulist Press.

The book's introduction is a valuable summary of Rauschenbusch's spirituality which is, as Hudson admits, "easy to recognize but difficult to define, describe, and characterize" (p. 41). This is because Rauschenbusch's theology was itself evolving and changing within his spiritual development. Hudson locates Rauschenbusch's spiritual heritage in the tradition of great revivalists such as Lyman Beecher, Charles G. Finney, and Dwight L. Moody. These evan-

gelicals combined enthusiasm for revivals with encouragement for social reform efforts. Hudson also traces the important influence of the William R. Williams family on Rauschenbusch. Rauschenbusch came into contact with this family while he was pastoring in Hell's Kitchen in New York City. The elder Williams, pastor of Amity Baptist Church, emphasized evangelical social concern in his ministry, and this heritage lived on in his son Leighton, who was a close friend of Rauschenbusch. Joined by another Baptist pastor, Rauschenbusch and Leighton Williams formed the nucleus of "The Brotherhood of the Kingdom," which continued to meet for twenty years, uniting a wide variety of social gospel figures.

One of the primary values of this volume is the broad range of writings which Hudson includes. This in itself demonstrates the thread of spirituality that can be followed throughout Rauschenbusch's works. Hudson begins the readings with selections written latest in Rauschenbusch's life, when he was suffering from cancer. In a letter Rauschenbusch recounts his religious experience, and his poem "The Gate at the End of the Road" radiates the mysticism that pervaded his life. A chapter entitled "Formative Years" presents letters written concerning his seminary training and earliest ministerial efforts. Two summers spent as a supply pastor for a German Baptist Church in Louisville, Kentucky, had a decided influence on Rauschenbusch. He wrote to a friend: "I want to be a pastor, powerful with men, preaching to them Christ as the man in whom their affections and energies can find the satisfaction in which [humankind] is groaning" (p. 53). This note, sounded early in his ministry, remained a constant refrain in his later writings. Other writings in a chapter entitled the "Brotherhood of the Kingdom" depict the continued development of Rauschenbusch's evangelical Christianity which would later break down the barriers between the sacred and secular, and individual and social salvation.

Following chapters also include Rauschenbusch publications that have not been readily available to the reader. "The Culture of the Spiritual Life" is an article written by Rauschenbusch when he returned to teach at Rochester Theological Seminary. "The Worker," an article published in 1898, discusses the inauguration of the spirit of Pentecost. In "The Welsh Revival and Primitive

Christianity" (1905), Rauschenbusch shared his thoughts on the Welsh revival. These articles are joined by two essays and one sermon in which Rauschenbusch addressed the question, How does God disclose Himself to People? Not only does Rauschenbusch show his willingness to tackle deep theological issues, but he also proves that he can express complex problems in a clear and precise writing style.

Hudson points to an article published by *The Independent* in 1904 as the beginning of Rauschenbusch's "public ministry." This article, entitled "The New Evangelism," is important because in it Rauschenbusch analyzed the problem of an effective evangelism. The old evangelism was powerless because "modern life has gone through immense changes and the church has not kept pace with it in developing the latent moral and spiritual resources of the gospel which are needed by the new life" (p. 142). The new evangelism, on the other hand, "will have to give an adequate definition of how a Christian man should live under modern conditions, and then summon men to live so" (p. 143). The selections from the three major Rauschenbusch works—*Christianity and the Social Crisis* (1907), *Christianizing the Social Order* (1912), and *A Theology of the Social Gospel* (1917)—concentrate on evangelistic concern rather than historical or social analyses. Hudson wisely chose to close the book with a chapter from Rauschenbusch's *Prayers for the Social Awakening*. The prayers chosen are the "more general prayers" and for that reason are the more enduring ones. These prayers are not only helpful in private meditations but adaptable to church liturgies as well.

The editing of this book is scholarly enough to be used in seminaries and universities. At the same time Hudson does not allow his own commentary to distract the reader from experiencing Rauschenbusch. Church study groups will find this book a valuable resource. Anyone interested in reclaiming an evangelical heritage that combined a profound personal piety with commitment to social Christianity will appreciate this volume. Hudson, who has been well acquainted with Rauschenbusch for quite some time, admits that he has gained a "fresh perspective" on the great reformer: "There were aspects of his life and thought that were unknown to me, and I was much the poorer for my lack of exposure to them" (p. 1). Those

desiring to relate faith to practice will also be "much the poorer" if this work is not examined.

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Armstrong, Richard S. *The Pastor As Evangelist*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1984. Pp. 202. \$9.95.

This is the third book on evangelism by Princeton's professor of ministry and evangelism. All three should be required reading in these days of renewed emphasis in the church on evangelism. His first book, *The Oak Lane Story*, drew on his experience as a city pastor and pleads for an evangelism that will break through the barriers of race and prejudice that cripple cities and divide churches. The second stressed sensitivity to human needs. It was called *Service Evangelism* and reminded the church that evangelism is for the salvation and well-being of others, not primarily for the enrichment or growth of the church.

His new book begins with the uncomfortable discovery that though few churches will accept evangelistic responsibility "without the active leadership, support, and involvement of the pastor," too often the pastor is "the bottleneck in the process," not the enabler. But Armstrong does not scold, he encourages.

His first chapters sympathetically review some of the negative images that prejudice pastors against evangelism, and plead for a more positive understanding of the evangelistic possibilities of the pastoral office. His working definition is simple and scriptural: evangelism is "the proclamation of the gospel" as the good news preached by Jesus and about Jesus in the New Testament. He saves this from oversimplification by proceeding at once to consider a number of amplifying descriptions of evangelism which point out the indispensable relationships of evangelism to ministry, mission, witness, and social action.

But whatever its wider contexts may be, not everything the church does is evangelism, for Armstrong's thesis is that evangelism remains evangelism only when its intentional, integrating focus is on the Christian message of God's gift of grace in Jesus Christ. Yet when there is evangelistic concern, there can be an evangelistic thrust in all the pasto-

ral relationships of the parish. The key, says Armstrong, is in the willingness to share the faith with others, "reaching out . . . in Christian love . . . in such a way that they will freely respond and want to commit themselves to trust, love, and obey God" as disciples of Jesus Christ.

The chapter titles make clear that the author's purpose is practical, helpful assistance in various forms of such pastoral evangelism. "The Pastor's Evangelistic Responsibilities" is a guide through some of the intellectual, professional, and emotional barriers that make pastors suspicious of evangelism or ineffective in it. Another chapter on "The Pastor's Personal Faith" makes the obvious but seldom discussed point that "you can't share your faith if you don't have a faith to share." Faith, says Armstrong, is a gift of God's grace, centered on Christ, and calling for total commitment. The fact that it is God's gift, not the pastor's, takes the arrogance out of sharing it with others.

Other chapters include a valuable series of suggestions on how the pastor can relate evangelistically in the parish with different age groups, problem parishioners, staff, and, perhaps most difficult of all, with his or her own family. There are sections on evangelistic styles, and on the difference between evangelistic preaching and sharing the faith in small groups or one on one.

When Armstrong reminds ministers that "theology is the church's conversation with itself; evangelism is the church's conversation with the world," he is speaking from experience. He knows the world of the church as pastor and professor, but he also knows the worlds of baseball and advertising, and of music and poetry, and he served in World War II.

This is more than another how-to-do-it book for pastors. The author's solid base in scripture, his persuasive theological clarity and integrity in personal witness make it important reading for anyone challenged by the church's rediscovery of the urgency of evangelism. It is possible that if Presbyterians, not to mention others, would give themselves to evangelism as effectively as Armstrong practices and writes about it, the current tide of mainline denominational decline could be reversed. In any case, this thoughtful, warm-hearted book belongs on any list of the best writing on evangelism being done today.

SAMUEL HUGH MOFFETT
Princeton Theological Seminary

Shelp, Earl E., & Sunderland, Ronald H., eds. *The Pastor as Prophet*. New York: Pilgrim Press, 1985. Pp. 184. \$9.95.

From professional concern to passionate appeal describes the course of presentation in this useful collection of essays dealing with the role of prophetic ministry in the contemporary church. Six prominent interpreters of the biblical and theological traditions of American theological education set out for pastoral ministry the issues and expectations of our faith.

The editors, beginning with the nature of pastoral ministry, occupied with the preparation for it, and eager to continue to make sure that pastoral ministry is soundly based in the faith tradition of the churches which it serves, trace the relation of the developing pastoral education tradition to other elements in the church's life. This history leads from pastoral counseling, through education and theological elements, directly into the ethical and prophetic role of pastoral ministry. It does so by introducing six essays around the motif of the pastor as prophet.

The editors note two consistent themes that occur in the essays. First, there is an interdependence between prophetic and pastoral ministries; and second, that prophetic witness is properly a task for the whole community of faith.

The essays move in a striking progression. Beginning with the ethical interpretations of Stanley Hauerwas, through three specific biblical investigations—the Old Testament by Walter Brueggemann, the Gospel tradition by John Howard Yoder, and Pauline history by George W. MacRae—the collection continues with a call beyond scholarship to passion in Daniel Migliore's investigation of the image of the Passion of God, and finds concrete expression in Jorge Lara-Braud's personal exposition of liberation theology.

The temptation to faculty members, setting out within a professional community to deal with what pastor's face, is to become detached from the reality of the life of churches in particular congregations. (To have such a collection reviewed by a church bureaucrat only increases the danger.) It is remarkable and inspiring that these essays are constantly centered on the people of God in faith and worship.

At all points the problems facing the con-

gregation and its pastoral leadership are clear. Professor Hauerwas is the most direct in setting the difficulties before us. Professor Brueggemann focuses on the resulting destabilizing presence of those who prophesy in the name of the one revealed at Sinai, and directing the life of the Hebrew people. Professor Yoder makes clear the radical nature of Jesus' call. Useful among much that is rewarding is the emphasis that the "bearer of the prophetic task is the whole people of God. . . ."

Professor MacRae may not be aware how helpful his study of the concept of the prophet as an office in the New Testament Church really is until he talks with pastors whose congregations have been torn apart by aberrations of the charismatic movement.

Professor Migliore becomes pastoral to those in pastoral situations when he uses contemporary apathy and the image of the Passion of God as ways to understand both the prophetic and pastoral dimensions of ministry in the community of faith. In fact, he is himself prophetic when he calls us to join the biblical witness and "to proclaim a God who is the supremely passionate advocate of justice and whose power is defined precisely by the freedom to undergo passion for others."

In a very personal survey of Latin American Liberation Theology, Jorge Lara-Braud points us to the place in contemporary church life where pastoral and prophetic forces join to bring the church alive as faithful in its response to the call of the biblical God. He has given us a most comprehensive, personal, and useful introduction to Liberation Theology, both its roots and its current message. For those who need such an introduction, the article is worth the price of the book.

On the whole, this is a rewarding discussion. I do have a few reservations. The first is, to quote Yogi Berra, "... just more of that *deja vu* all over again." To someone raised in the theological world of the mid-fifties, whose first course in New Testament in seminary was called "Prophetic Realism and the Gospel," who lived as a pastor during the activist sixties and the emotional seventies in Southern California, the book seems to argue for the obvious. The essays are all worthwhile, and sometimes exciting, definitions of what we all were taught and appropriated for the basis of our pastoral ministry. The division of ministry into "social justice" and

"pastoral care" in this one pastor's experience over thirty years is largely a creature of straw against which one tilts. We may have failed to be faithful to one or the other from time to time (and there is a part of American protestantism which we never understand or know much about) but in the main we have tried to hold the gospel in its fullness. To assume the theme of the book to be unusual or new is to ignore the experience of most who will read it. Essentially the only problem is with the premise. The contents are excellent and most helpful.

Second, while reference is made to the great prophetic voices of Walter Rauschenbusch, Karl Barth, Reinhold Niebuhr, and Martin Luther King, no note is made that for all of them the experience of pastoral ministry in a congregation is germinative of their work. Rauschenbusch himself says in the introduction to *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, "I have written this book to discharge a debt. For eleven years I was a pastor among the working people of the West Side of New York City. . . ." Barth did his most remarkable writing in a Swiss parish as the world convulsed in the Great War. Niebuhr sharpened his focus with a lengthy pastorate in Detroit at the beginning of the automotive age and the development of mass unions in America. King never ceased to be the pastor of a Baptist Church, no matter how famous he became. All identify the call to be within and a part of the community of faith at worship and at work, as they exercise their prophetic ministry.

The last point I would make is simple. Even with this sound exposition, I cannot believe that you can set out to be a prophet, or to be prophetic. Rather you set out to be faithful. That may mean you and your community of faith are prophetic. But the Bible gives very bad press to those who go to schools to become prophets, and who make a professional virtue of the incredibly costly task God lays upon the chosen who are faithful. Our constant plea to beginning theologs, and to educated lay people, to "be prophetic . . ." cheapens the concept and the challenge.

CHARLES A. HAMMOND
Presbytery of Wabash Valley

Faber, Heije. *Striking Sails*. Trans. by Kenneth R. Mitchell. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984. Pp. 157. \$9.95 (paper).

This is a most important work by Europe's best known pastoral theologian. Prior to his retirement, Dr. Faber was professor of pastoral psychology and the psychology of religion at Leydon and Tilburg in Holland. Anyone associated with Princeton Theological Seminary during the academic year 1980-81 knew Dr. Faber as a visiting fellow in pastoral theology. Those of us who got to know him, as I had the opportunity to do, remember him as a very kind, sage, and knowledgeable man who represented for many of us the essence of Eriksonian integrity. Dr. Faber is the author of *The Art of Pastoral Conversation* and *Pastoral Care in the Modern Hospital*, both highly acclaimed and often used in pastoral education courses.

The sub-title of this book is *A Pastoral-Psychological view of Growing Older in Our Society*. Faber writes from the perspective of Dutch society, but the able translation of Kenneth Mitchell makes most of the material presented relevant to American readers. Dr. Faber writes from both the personal experience of his own aging (he is seventy-nine years old) as well as his great depth of pastoral experience in the church and as a pastoral scholar. For this reason this is a powerful work and must reading for all who minister to older persons.

The title of this book comes from Dante who once compared aging with striking one's sails as one enters a safe harbor. The other image is of youth, setting sails for going out to sea. Both must be done with care and cooperation. Faber also offers another telling analogy concerning the process of youth and aging, but this one is not quite as serene. In our culture both adolescents and older people are not expected to *do* much. They are excused from work, from having clear functions. There is a critical difference, however, in that in our society the youth is considered to be on a moratorium—the older person is expelled. The prevalent image of many who live and work with older people is that the older person is in a process of preparing to die. The expectation is for the older person to give up and slow down. Faber objects to this isolationist attitude. While the older person is profoundly aware of differences in his or

her life (particularly from the point of view of energy level, memory, and sexual interest) he or she is also struggling with Eriksonian integrity: coming to know that his or her own life has had some impact on the whole and that he or she is a repository of the history of all that we are. Faber makes his point well. Aging is a developmental task (like youth and adolescence) and not just an end or a working to an end.

Faber's work is both theoretical and anecdotal. First he presents some common notions of aging both from the point of view of the aging and from the point of view of youth. Some of the common stereotypes most are familiar with emerge: youth are menacing and the aging are weak, dirty, and paranoid. In the first chapter of the book Faber offers some explanation for some of the violence against the aged. It is oedipal. Many cultures encourage hostile feelings toward the elderly, as Simone de Beauvoir has pointed out. Oedipal feeling may also account for most younger people's inability to discuss sexuality among the aged.

Faber next presents several important viewpoints and theories from social scientists who have devoted their lives to the study of the aging process. Of particular importance is the work of Erikson (whom Faber nonetheless criticizes as being a bit too optimistic and idealistic) and a Dutch researcher, J.M.A. Munnichs. Unfortunately none of Munnichs' material has been translated into English and so the reader gets only a taste of this man's obviously important work. Munnichs' notion of disengagement and then renewed engagement but at a greater distance makes so much sense to me in my own experience with older people.

Probably the core of the work is in chapters 5-7. Here Faber presents several detailed case studies of pastors and other helping professionals working with aging people. The notions of work, isolation, family, abuse, and integrity get full play. Faber encourages the reader to write his or her own commentary to each case study and then at the end offers his own for comparison. One case study describes a lawyer who retires amidst great fanfare but who shares his own attitude with a geographically distant friend at the time of the retirement and again a year later. This case poignantly reminds us of the disparity between the experience of aging and much of culture's attitude toward it.

The last section of the book deals with pastoral work with old people. Here Faber sees the work of the pastor and of all who call themselves Christian as taking at least three directions. First must be the ministry of stimulation—fighting the isolation and the lack of industry forced upon many older people. Second must be political and social organizing that addresses the problems of the structures in which the aged find themselves, including the structure of the church. Third, all must get to know the aged and seek them out, but not in a condescending way. They are witnesses to our history. They have something to say to all of us. Faber also deals with the notion of defensive and integrative religion among the elderly. Anyone who works with the aging must know the difference. Faber also deals with such taboo subjects as suicide and sexuality in a most open and honest way.

Not since 1949 when Cedarleaf and Maves published *Older People and the Church* has as important a work on aging appeared. It is the best that pastoral theology has to offer in this very important area by one of the grand leaders of the field.

BRIAN H. CHILDS

Columbia Theological Seminary

Ryken, Leland. *Windows to the World*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1985. Pp. 192. \$7.95.

In a review of a recent book, *Edmund Wilson* (by David Castronova), in the *New York Times* (July 28, 1985), the novelist, James Atlas, speaks of Wilson's "utter devotion to literature. He believed it had a moral value, that it could illuminate and give purpose to even the darkest impulse of humanity." Not ever having had a professor of English literature who was at best anything more than a Christian humanist, this reviewer found this new volume, *Windows to the World*, a satisfaction to read and to reflect upon later. Written by Dr. Ryken, the professor of English at Wheaton College (Illinois), we have here a competent and perceptive discussion of literature within a particular framework: each chapter explores a given literary topic and then concludes by fitting the data into a Christian context. In these latter sections, the author comes over from the realm of academe and into the Christian environment where he indicates how literature by its sub-

stance and as a medium can give us "windows to the world."

There are seven main chapters, each with an engaging and suggestive theme: "Why Literature Is Good for You"; "Imagination: The 'Lie' That Tells the Truth"; "Literature as Recreation"; "How Writers Influence Their Audience"; "How Readers Complete What Writers Begin"; "Does Literature Tell the Truth?"; and "Literature and Morality." Basically the author is writing about literature and its interpretation, but his intention is to examine the encounter that occurs when Christian leaders come with their own "lens" and "antennae" to the study of literature. This does not mean that the Christian's approach to literature is axiomatically judgmental. Prof. Ryken sees "literature as life" and for us as Christians "it clarifies the human situation to which the Christian faith speaks" (p. 34).

This volume makes exciting and refreshing reading and, though not the author's primary intention, it has much to say to the preaching ministry. Many a Sunday sermon could be saved from dullness by a preacher who would read and take this book seriously. Teachers of preachers could use it as a gateway to impress upon fledgling seminarians how the right use of and consistent reflection upon good literature are the key to achieving that effective impact methodologically that modern preaching demands. Again and again in these pages, some of the elements Ryken uncovers regarding literature are the very characteristics that can make contemporary preaching influential and without which many congregations are inclined to turn the pulpit off. Many years ago, the great Welsh preacher, Richard Roberts, wrote a book entitled *The Preacher as a Man of Letters*, which was a discussion of literature from the preacher's point of view. Professor Ryken has taken his position and perspective from the nature and service of great literature and through the lens of his Christian inheritance he can show the modern preacher fresh insights into many techniques that are the homiletician's stock in trade: empathy, audience encounter and response, imagination, inner reality, world view, persuasion, illumination, identity, and so forth. Moreover, these terms and Ryken's definitions come with a brand new color that makes them all the more meaningful and serviceable.

DONALD MACLEOD

Princeton Theological Seminary

Kemper, Deane A. *Effective Preaching: A Manual for Students and Pastors*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1985. Pp. 142. \$10.95.

Deane Kemper, professor of ministry at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, has written a no-nonsense, and, to some degree, a no-frills book about the basic tasks and skills of preaching. Despite the promise of the sub-title that this manual is for both students and pastors, it is clearly the student, indeed the *beginning* student, who forms the primary audience of this volume. The reader is led patiently and gently by the hand through each step of the sermon development process. Along the way, Kemper's voice is calm, confident, and reassuring. "You can do this," he seems to whisper on each page.

Kemper begins by picturing a "model" of the ideal sermon: three interlocking circles labeled "Word," "Preacher's Personality," and "Human Situation." Where the "Preacher's Personality" overlaps the "Word" is marked "biblical interpretation." Where it intersects with the "Human Situation" is designated "social commentary." The place where "Word" joins "Human Situation" is called "theological formulation," and the spot where all three circles intersect is the "sermon." It is possible, of course, to pick at the imprecisions in such a model [e.g., Is there not social commentary in biblical interpretation? Where is the church in such a picture? Is "theological formulation" an adequate way to speak of the relationship between the Word and the human situation?], but the model is designed to be illustrative, not scientifically accurate. Kemper rather wishes to say, in a simple manner, that a sermon is not a simple thing. It involves the complex interplay of all that we can know and experience about God, the Bible, theology, ourselves as preachers, and the human situation. Taken as a whole, the model seems designed more to frustrate simplistic formulae (such as, "just preach the Bible") than to provide methodological clarity for the task of preaching.

When Kemper gets around to describing the "nuts and bolts" of sermon preparation, he envisions the process beginning with the determination of the subject, or theme, of the sermon. Though he is committed to biblical preaching, Kemper does not insist that the

subject always come from the Bible, but allows for it to arise from several other sources, such as the denominational or liturgical calendar or the pastoral needs of the congregation. "It is not the starting point," he insists, "but the finishing point that makes a sermon biblical."

Once the preacher has the basic theme in hand, the next step is to organize the various facets of that theme into a sermon. Taking a cue from Henry Babcock Adams, Kemper renames the traditional components of the sermon. Introduction, Body, and Conclusion become Question, Assertion, and Invitation. "Every sermon," he maintains, "addresses an issue or problem which can be stated in the interrogative and raised in the introduction." This question is then "answered with a thesis, premise, or truth" in the "assertion" section of the sermon, and finally, the hearers are invited to make a response in the closing section of the sermon. This "invitation will be hortatory in nature and usually expressed in the imperative or subjunctive mood."

Now, at one level, all of this seems to be a good way to infuse some energy and movement into sermon design. Don't give the hearers an introduction; voice a question they have. Don't exposit a doctrine; provide an answer to their question. Don't leave them motionless; motivate them to action. It makes some sense.

But one has to wonder about the larger implications of viewing *all* sermons as essentially answers to people's questions. As an occasional "technique," the question-answer approach has its place. But as an overarching theory of preaching it comes perilously close to replacing the mystery of the Christian faith with a series of puzzles to be solved. The gospel calls our questions into question, and room must be made in preaching for *that*. The gospel discloses the depths of life, giving sight to eyes too blind even to know what questions to ask, and our view of preaching must also account for *that*. Markus Barth once said that the best Easter sermon he had ever heard was from a preacher who simply "fell down in front of the mystery of the text," and preaching must allow for *that*, too.

The closing chapters of Kemper's book are devoted to straightforward advice on such matters as where to find sermon illustrations (reading, observations, and experience), how to write "for the ear" (fewer words, shorter words, sensuous words, etc.),

how to dress in the pulpit (plain clothing which does not call attention to the preacher), and how to deliver the sermon. A summary chapter on "Preparing the Sermon," which includes some illustrative process notes (including some exegetical observations) toward a sermon on the Wedding at Cana (John 2:1-11), is particularly clear and helpful.

Deane Kemper has created a program for learning about preaching which is simple, clear, and manageable, and he has proved himself to be a sympathetic teacher and friend to beginning preaching students. His journey carefully avoids the dangerous intersections and risky curves where the heights cause the heart of the preacher to pause. One hopes, though, that beginning students, after a few reassuring spins around Kemper's test path, will be bold enough to head out for the open road.

THOMAS G. LONG
Princeton Theological Seminary

Palmer, Earl F. *Old Law—New Life*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1984. Pp. 128. \$7.95.

Earl Palmer reveals in this book that the difficult task of relating theology to teaching and preaching can be done, and done with an excitement and enthusiasm that inspires. What the author intends to do he actually does accomplish. In the Preface he states, "My first concern has been to explore the theological significance of the law of Moses within its Old Testament and New Testament settings. From that standpoint, I have tried to ask the discipleship questions so that our study will dare to relate the theological questions to our contemporary lives. My perspective is that of a Christian who recognizes the law as that which reveals the will of God."

The book is timely. Gallup polls continue to indicate that a large percent of the population of our country that favors religion say they believe in the Ten Commandments, the Sermon on the Mount, and the Golden Rule. Alas many of these, both within and without the institutional church, cannot quote a commandment. *Old Law—New Life* can help them either directly or through the skillful guidance of a teacher or pastor. It is a fresh approach, fleshing out the commandments

by mining meaning in the original Hebrew words and phrases; giving the "flip" or positive side; pointing out the part they have played in the Jewish-Christian faith journey; and showing their relevance to many of today's personal and social problems.

These problems, in many cases, have to do with relationships in the small as well as big arenas of life. The commandments are God's gifts to give guidance in a whole range of relationships, and to help us to discover who we are and how we relate to others. According to the author, the Law (Ten Commandments, etc.) shows us "that we are creatures with four essential relationships—to God, ourselves, our neighbor, our earth. Put them together, and you have a human being. The implication of the law is that when any one of the four relationships is in confusion or distortion, that crisis of brokenness will gravely affect the other parts of the whole."

In dealing with the first few commandments, the author portrays how God's care for his people causes him to intervene in their lives and history, revealing who he is, and how they are to relate to him. Then he moves to specifics in terms of how his people, and indeed all people (as the commandments are not just for Israel), are to relate to one another.

The author's study of the Fifth commandment is particularly enriching in this regard. He asserts that this commandment at its core represents a Gospel understanding of life. Children are to "weigh heavy" (meaning in literal sense of Hebrew *coben*; and usually translated "honor") their parents, recognizing their great worth. Then attention is immediately called to Paul's interpretation in Ephesians 6 where he lifts up this commandment of promise, and points out the responsibility of parents honoring their children by not provoking them to anger.

The chapter dealing with the fifth commandment has many additional interesting and provocative insights. For example, when we honor a person an impetus often takes place whereby they endeavor to live up to this positive assessment of their worth. And this gets underscored with a delightful quote from C. S. Lewis, "the cure for pride is not the humiliation of a person so that pride is broken. Rather the cure for pride is to honor people so that they do not need the false support of a proud spirit." Further commentary on this commandment notes the fine role the

Church plays as the transgenerational extended family for those whose kin live in distant places. Finally the chapter touches on the complex issue of abortion, underlining the worth of every human being and, by anticipation, the protection of the unborn child.

Controversial issues are not skirted in the fifth or final five commandments. The writer is both sensitive and forthright as he uses his gifts of scholarship and communication. I was somewhat taken aback, however, as I read the following when he was interpreting the commandment dealing with the Sabbath and its implications for the balance and rhythm of work, worship, and rest, "The Bible does not have a doctrine of retirement." I had become a retiree just a few months previous! One of the joys of the status was to savor a work like *Old Law—New Life* without worrying about getting to work on time! But in all fairness, the author goes on to say some very important things that are helpful and applicable to retiree types:

The Bible does not have a doctrine of retirement; rather what it has is a doctrine of discipleship with variations in the kinds of work and rest we are to choose and do. . . . We are to work and to rest in rhythmic balance, if possible, right up to the end of our lives. The work may perhaps evolve through several fascinating careers and opportunities of stewardship and service, but work and rest must accompany each other throughout the journey.

I say "Amen" to that, and would only add that the ten lesson Study Guide at the end of the volume is a real bonus.

JACK COOPER

Princeton Theological Seminary

Wohlfarth, Hannsdieter. *Johann Sebastian Bach* (trans. by Albert L. Blackwell). Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985. Pp. 118. \$14.95.

This monograph on the life and musical works of Bach, by the professor of musicology in Freiburg (Federal Republic of Germany), is a fitting tribute on the tercentenary of the composer's birth. It is a study of Bach's music and life, as well as the period of history in which he lived. In a free-flowing and interesting style, the author groups Bach's musical output according to the different locations in which he worked. He shows how the composer reflected his religious devotion and understanding of the tenets of his Lutheran faith in his church music. Included are references to some unfortunate situations Bach encountered, especially in Leipzig, which are quoted from letters and memoirs taken from David and Mendel, *The Bach Reader* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1945).

Profusely illustrated and written without an overabundance of technical terminology, this volume is a helpful introduction to the work of Bach for any clergy or layperson. It would be fitting as a "coffee-table book," which is said only to underline its literary style and non-technical nature, not to detract in any way from the quality and breadth of its research. A perfect gift!

DAVID A. WEADON

Princeton Theological Seminary

KARL BARTH CENTENNIAL SYMPOSIUM

Princeton Theological Seminary
April 10-12, 1986

Thursday, April 10

7:30 PM Professor George Lindbeck, Yale University
"Karl Barth and the Task of Post-Liberal Theology"

Friday, April 11

10:30 AM Professor Michael Welker, Tuebingen University
"Karl Barth's Theology and Process Theology"

2:30 PM Professor William Werpehowski, Villanova University
"Biblical Narrative and the Ethics of Karl Barth"

7:30 PM Professor Theodore Gill, John Jay College of Criminal
Justice
"Barth and Mozart"

All Mozart Concert, Princeton Seminary Chamber
Singers and Orchestra

Saturday, April 12

9:30 AM Professor Colin Gunton, University of London
"Karl Barth's Trinitarian Theology and Human
Freedom"

All lectures will be held in the Main Lounge of the Mackay Campus Center,
except the Friday evening presentation, which will be held in Miller Chapel.

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The Christian Witness and Approach to the
World's Religions**

Feb. 28-Mar. 1 — Edward Hulmes, University of Durham, England; John Wiley Nelson, First Presbyterian Church, Trenton, NJ; Charles A. Ryerson III, Princeton Theological Seminary; Donald K. Swearer, Swarthmore College

PREACHING AND PUBLIC ISSUES

Mar. 3 — Thomas G. Long, Princeton Theological Seminary

**MISSIONARY SPIRITUALITY: LETTING THE
GOSPEL GOVERN OUR LIVES**

Mar. 3-7 — Anna-Marie Aagaard, Aarhus University, Denmark

THEMES IN EZEKIEL

Mar. 10-13 — Rabbi Solomon S. Bernards, Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, and Ruth S. Bernards

**CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AS PRACTICAL
THEOLOGY**

Mar. 17-20 — Donald E. Miller, Bethany Theological Seminary

THE GOSPEL, THE CHURCH, AND THE POOR

Apr. 1-3 — M. Richard Shaull, Princeton Theological Seminary

THE NEW TESTAMENT AND LAY MINISTRY

Apr. 7 — Thomas W. Gillespie, president, Princeton Theological Seminary

MANAGING CONFLICT

Apr. 7-10 — Pneuman/Bruehl Associates

CONSULTING SKILLS

Apr. 7-10 — Pneuman/Bruehl Associates

NEURO-LINGUISTIC PROGRAMMING

Apr. 12-13 — Pneuman/Bruehl Associates

BUILDING RELATIONSHIP

Apr. 12-13 — Pneuman/Bruehl Associates

**PERSONAL LEADERSHIP AND
ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

Apr. 13-18 — John C. Talbot, industrial missionary

MEDICAL ETHICS AND HEALTH THEOLOGY

Apr. 14-17 — Kenneth L. Vaux, University of Illinois

**THE CORINTHIAN CORPUS: GOO, COMMUNITY,
AND MINISTRY**

Apr. 21-24 — Mattie E. Hart, Flagler College

**CONTEMPORARY APPROACHES TO CHRISTIAN
EDUCATION: AN UPDATE**

Apr. 23-25 — Jack L. Seymour, Scarritt College

MANAGING VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS

May 4-9 — John C. Talbot, industrial missionary

**THE POLITICAL THEOLOGIES OF PEACE AND
WAR**

May 5 — Lowell W. Livezey, Princeton University; Lois Gehr Livezey, Princeton Theological Seminary

PREACHING FROM THE PROPHET AMOS

May 12-15 — Marvin A. McMickle, St. Paul's Baptist Church, Montclair, NJ

**A THEOLOGY OF OUST: SPIRITUALITY AND
CLAY**

May 12-25 — Sasha Makovkin, ceramicist, Mendocino, CA

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PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

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Biblical Hebrew, J.J.M. Roberts and Princeton Theological Seminary staff; **New Testament Greek**, Princeton Theological Seminary staff.

June 9–27

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June 30–July 18

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